Whalenism—*an Editorial*

The Nation

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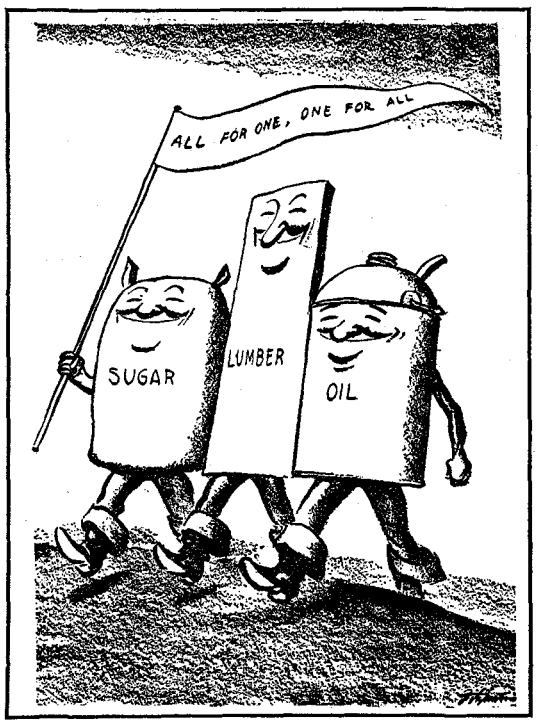
The Tariff Sell-out



Fitzpatrick in the St. Louis Post-Dispatch

My Dear Senator

On a Certain Betrayal in Washington

by Oswald Garrison Villard

Old Joe's Senate

by Paul Y. Anderson

The Miners' Rebellion

by Louis Stanley

"The Green Pastures"

reviewed by Joseph Wood Krutch

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The naval conference is now back where it started two months ago. Private talks are going on but no formal business is being transacted. There was one meeting today, that of a subcommittee formed to decide how to scrap ships, but none of the participants has yet agreed to scrap. This subcommittee had tea and adjourned. . . .

THIS IS THE REPORT from London to the New York *World* as we go to press. Not unnaturally there broke out on the same day violent protests in the House of Commons. Commander Kenworthy, himself a naval officer of distinction, who has for years been earnestly working for disarmament, spoke right out in meeting, calling the conference "a terrible failure," and saying that the failure should be admitted so that the delegates might "part friends" and try over again. Commander Kenworthy's suggestion for saving the conference at the last moment was a five-year building holiday all around. That would redeem it a little, but what a ghastly mess it all is. If some miracle does not take place, everybody connected with it must equally share the disgrace of this absolute breakdown in statesmanship. But to our minds Mr. Hoover and Mr. Stimson are particularly guilty, because of their lack of vigor, courage, and readiness to abandon parity and really disarm.

THE GREAT DAY OF PRAYER for the embattled Christians and Jews in Russia has come and gone in our American churches with Bishop Manning unctuously declaring that the church is not intending a bitter attack upon the Soviet leaders—"they know not what they do." It is a fortunate thing, we fancy, that one does not have to prove positive results from a day of prayer like this. We are ourselves not quite clear whether the appeal was to a recreant Deity to stop what is going on in Russia or whether it was intended solely to soften the heart of the commissars in Moscow. If it was the latter then the day of prayer went wrong, for its first effect was to produce an Associated Press cable from Moscow announcing that there will be "a more intensive assault against God and the churches during the approaching Easter period." Stalin himself, on the other hand, has issued orders that any Communist party-worker found guilty of using violent methods in the fight against religion will be severely punished. It was characteristically stupid of the Soviet leadership, from their point of view, to speed up that campaign just at this time. While we sincerely hope that the Soviets will permit to all the religious freedom guaranteed by their constitution, we cannot deny that it would be extremely enlightening to see if a country can be made prosperous, decent, and law-abiding without the aid of a powerful church. Does Bishop Manning fear the outcome of such an experiment?

IN STILL ANOTHER DIRECTION, the collectivization of Russian agriculture, Stalin has given orders to go more slowly. Here again he is wise. There was certainly no reasonable excuse for proceeding with such tremendous speed as was reported, with increasing peasant resistance and ever-present bloodshed. A year in the life of a country is but a minute; to create great opposition and produce unrest by a given reform is never wise. Private letters from Moscow report increasing food straits and mounting prices for the necessaries of life. There is a tremendous lack of soap, butter, sugar, eggs. Clothing remains extremely dear and inadequate in supply. But that does not deter the leaders from carrying on at full speed in their desire to outstrip America industrially within a few years. All of which gives point to the following story, which has just reached us from Moscow:

> . . . It is the year after the Five-Year Plan is completed. The sky is black with airplanes. One man riding in last year's airplane is overtaken by a friend in a new model and hails him by radio.
>
> "I see you have the new motor from our super-factory."
>
> "Yes, in this model we have at last surpassed America! Two hundred miles an hour. Cost minimum; operation fool-proof. Want to show it to you, but not now. I'm in a rush."
>
> "What's your hurry?"
>
> "I hear they're selling eggs in Kiev!"
>
> The other friend would like to follow, but doesn't. His airplane is a slower model and it is impossible to get there before the eggs are gone.

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THE PRESIDENT'S COMMISSION on Haiti has done an astonishingly quick and effective piece of work, for which the people of Haiti and the United States alike have cause to be grateful; for it promises at once to restore freedom to Haiti and to reestablish the honor of the United States. The uprising of the early winter and the Aux Cayes slaughter of December 6 were immediately responsible for the appointment of the commission by calling public attention to conditions in the island. The United Press at once sent a special correspondent by airplane to Haiti to supplement the work of its regular correspondents, and the Associated Press also made special and commendable efforts to cover the situation. (We regret that the article appearing in our issue of March 12 has been misinterpreted as implying a criticism of the handling of the Aux Cayes incident by these news agencies.) Increasing knowledge caused increasing public restiveness and led to appointment of the commission. Under the present arrangement, fully described in our International Relations Section by Mrs. Helena Hill Weed, special correspondent of *The Nation* in Haiti, M. Eugène Roy, a business man who has never been in politics, will become provisional president when President Borno's term expires on May 15 and will have the task of carrying out the agreement made by the commissioners and the Opposition leaders, to which the reluctant Borno finally assented on March 15. If, as there is every reason to hope, the arrangement is carried out in good faith on both sides and the American Occupation is withdrawn as rapidly as possible, President Hoover will have performed an act of statesmanship for which he should be given unstinted credit.

ALIEN REGISTRATION, we rejoice to say, is dead so far as this session of Congress goes. On March 12 the Senate Committee on Immigration held a hearing on the Blease bill providing for voluntary registration, so called, and the measure was deservedly buried under an avalanche of hostile criticism. Amos Pinchot pointed out that in effect the registration requirement would become compulsory because employers would inevitably discriminate against unregistered aliens, while Joseph Schlossberg, secretary-treasurer of the Amalgamated Clothing Workers of America, showed that registration would materially increase the difficulty of organizing aliens. Representatives of the American Jewish Committee, the National Council of Episcopal Churches, and other organizations declared that the measure would hurt Americanization work and would furnish endless opportunities of graft and corruption, to say nothing of being the beginning of a universal system of identification cards. Interestingly enough, the only persons to speak in behalf of the measure were Captain Trevor, representing the New York Chamber of Commerce, and Assistant Secretary of Labor Husband, speaking for Secretary Davis. It is a striking commentary on the intelligence and sympathies of the Secretary of Labor that he finds himself in such company on this issue.

THE JULIAN PETROLEUM SCANDAL, whose corrupt ramifications were found far and wide in Los Angeles and southern California a year and more ago, entered its final stage on March 11 when Asa Keyes, twenty-five years the public prosecutor, left Los Angeles to serve a term of from one to fourteen years as a prisoner at San Quentin prison. Keyes was found guilty in February, 1929, of conspiracy and bribe-taking in connection with the prosecution of persons who wrecked the Julian Petroleum Company, a $35,000,000 corporation. The Julian company case was not the only one in which bribery was charged; Keyes went in for that kind of plunder wholesale, and according to one estimate succeeded in gathering in as much as $140,000. Even so, and with the losses of the stock swindle still keenly remembered, the last day of his stay in the county jail, where he had been for thirteen months, was marked, according to the Associated Press, "by farewell visits of many of his friends. Judges, lawyers, newspapermen, and others came for a final word with the convicted man." Crime, if only it be in the grand manner, appears to confer distinction in the City of the Angels. A novel feature of the case is the fact that Keyes, in the five years in which he was a district attorney, sent more than 4,000 persons to San Quentin, and so bitter is the feeling against him there that the warden was reported at the time of his conviction to have considered giving him a cell in the condemned row to keep him from possible attack.

FREE SPEECH AND A FREE PRESS had their day in court on March 6 when Louis B. Seltzer, editor, and Carlton K. Matson, editorial writer, of the Cleveland *Press,* were purged of contempt of court by the Appellate Court of Cuyahoga County. The contempt with which Seltzer and Matson were charged consisted in a published criticism of an injunction, issued by Judge Frederick P. Walther of the Court of Common Pleas, forbidding the sheriff to interfere with races at the Thistledown track and the betting which accompanied them. The Appellate Court not only tore the injunction order in pieces, arraigned the motives of the lower court in issuing it, and declared that even if the accused had been guilty the thirty-day sentence was excessive, but frankly stated that "we live in an age when freedom of speech and freedom of press are paramount issues," and that "people should be allowed to say what they please and newspapers should be allowed to print what they please, always making themselves liable under the law of slander or the law of libel." We should like to be able to record that Judge Walther was in process of being removed from the bench.

MERGERS AND MORE MERGERS, with the usual opposition of stockholders who think that their interests have not been properly considered, and with rumors of war between one merger-creation and another, have become the order of the day in the industrial and financial world. Close upon the heels of the proposed consolidation of the Standard Oil Company of New York and the Vacuum Oil Company and the reported plans for merging the Chase National Bank, the Equitable Trust Company, and the Interstate Trust Company, all of New York, have come announcements of plans for a billion-dollar merger of the Bethlehem Steel Corporation and the Youngstown Sheet and Tube Company and of the acquisition by the Van Sweringen brothers of Cleveland of financial control of the Missouri Pacific railway system. The legality of the Standard-Vacuum merger, it is believed, will be first tested in the courts to determine whether or not it violates the order which in 1911 dissolved the old Standard Oil organization. The Bethlehem-Youngstown merger, if it is consummated, will offer a formidable challenge to the supremacy of the United States Steel Cor-

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poration, while the new control of the Missouri Pacific may open the way to a coast-to-coast railway system under a unified financial and administrative authority.

RAMSAY MACDONALD weathered the storm on March 13 when the Government, with an adventitious majority of seventy-three votes, defeated a motion of censure moved by the former Conservative Prime Minister, Stanley Baldwin. The circumstances of the vote were interesting and, in a way, dramatic. Two days before, a Conservative amendment of the coal bill had been carried by a majority of eight, but when Mr. Baldwin asked if the Government, in view of its defeat, intended to proceed with the bill, Mr. MacDonald defied the Opposition by inviting Mr. Baldwin to move a vote of general censure, and announced that "we will accept the decision." The victory on March 13 was actually due to the Liberals, who refused to join with the Conservatives in turning the Government out, although the full Labor strength, if it could have been mustered, would have been sufficient to insure success. The victory should not be misinterpreted either way. It does not mean that the Liberals will certainly support Labor when a vote is taken on the coal bill as a whole instead of on some minor provision; it means only that the Liberals are not ready to play the Conservative game by helping to unseat the Government at this stage. Mr. Baldwin himself seems not to have expected that his motion would be carried.

THE YOUNG PLAN is law as far as Germany is concerned, the bill giving effect to it having been passed by the Reichstag and signed by President von Hindenburg. With this has gone also the approval of the agreement regulating the payment of German reparations to the United States. The final vote on the Young plan, 270 to 192 with 3 abstentions, indicates the numerical strength of the opposition, but there is little doubt that the plan, now it has been accepted after full debate and in the face of violent attack from the Nationalists, will be carried out to the extent of Germany's ability. President von Hindenburg, in a proclamation, declared that he had put his name to the Young-plan law "with a heavy but resolute heart and after long and conscientious deliberation," believing that in comparison with the Dawes plan it "marks a bettering of our economic lot and an advance along the road toward Germany's freedom and reconstruction," and that a refusal "could but bring unforeseeable difficulties to our industry and finance and to our Fatherland grave crises with all their attendant menaces." President von Hindenburg's patriotic action does him honor and his words put the situation in a nutshell. Grievous as are the burdens which it imposes, the Young plan is less burdensome than a continuing Dawes plan would have been, and there was nothing sensible for Germany to do but to accept it.

THE MAN WITH THE HOE still survives in spite of the poem of Mr. Markham, but the Man with the Machete is doomed if the machine invented by C. G. Muench for cutting, topping, and stripping sugar cane proves as successful in practice as it proved in a demonstration the other day at Clewiston, Florida. Ex-Governor Smith of New York, who was one of the spectators, was quoted as expressing unstinted admiration for the new machine. When one considers how long ago the harvesting machine appeared in the grain fields of this country, and how many years before that the reaper was in use, it seems almost incomprehensible that to this day every bit of the labor in connection with gathering sugar cane is performed by hand up to the time it is carted away to the *central,* or grinding mill. The machinery of the *central* has been greatly improved in recent years, and the cane is squeezed and resqueezed until scarcely a drop of sweet is left. So perfect has the process of extraction become, in fact, that the molasses which once was a toothsome by-product is now so poor that in the West Indies much of it can no longer be sold and is piped away as waste. To bring similar efficiency into the process of harvesting sugar cane will be a boon to the industry, but it will bring little joy to thousands of men who now do the work with the machete.

THE DEATH of Mary E. Wilkins Freeman and of Arthur Sherburne Hardy removes from the American literary scene two figures who began their careers in that great decade of the 'eighties when Mark Twain, Howells, and Henry James were at their most flourishing, when thousands of readers were eagerly devouring Edward Bellamy's "Looking Backward," when Henry George's "Progress and Poverty" was just becoming known. Into this sturdier fare, Hardy poured a gentle, fragrant stream of romance. "Passe Rose" and "But Yet a Woman," among others of his novels, are vague but pleasant memories to those who read them. Mrs. Freeman was made of sterner stuff. The New England scene, which Sarah Orne Jewett had pictured with all the minor, negative virtues of charity and kindness and resignation, she saw in a light that would appear surprisingly modern to readers of today, coming to her for the first time. She was aware that unselfishness can be unhealthy, that martyrdom warps the human soul, that kindness does not come freshly from resignation. Young persons who are sure that the American novel is only just attaining eminence might do well to look up the novels of an earlier day, and to regret the passing of their creators. They will regret even more the death of one of the most distinguished of translators into English, Mr. C. K. Scott-Moncrieff, who died in Rome on March 1. If only for his incomparable rendering of one of the greatest of contemporary authors, Marcel Proust, whose "A la Recherche du Temps Perdu" he has brilliantly interpreted for English readers—on the last volume of which he was engaged when he died—he will inspire gratitude for his work and sorrow for an untimely death.

OUR WARMEST GREETINGS go out to the *New Freeman,* edited by Suzanne La Follette, the first issue of which has just appeared. If this new liberal weekly approximates the old *Freeman* under the editorship of Albert J. Nock it will be of great value indeed, for the *Freeman* remains in our memory as the best written and most carefully edited of all the American weeklies of our time. This new venture, we learn, is guaranteed for at least three years. That it may have established itself permanently by that time is our earnest wish. There can never be too many liberal weeklies to suit us, and since it will favor the taxation of land above all else, it will be particularly welcomed by the Single-Taxers who were such ardent supporters of the *Freeman* and are surely entitled to an organ of their own. That the editor is a woman makes us all the more eager for its and her success.

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Whalenism

WHAT is Whalenism? It is nothing new and is not confined to the city of New York nor to the police commissioner whose name it bears. It is that combination of official ignorance and stupidity, coupled with the belief that all officials are above and beyond the laws, which has come grievously to menace civil liberty in America. It is that phase of lawlessness which the Hoover Commission on Law Enforcement should study above all other, for more than anything else it explains the difference between the law-abiding character of the English people—just now closing twenty-one prisons for lack of prisoners—and the disgraceful lawlessness of the American nation. It is that official lawlessness which makes possible the third degree in almost every police station in the country; which daily results in the violation of personal rights guaranteed by the Constitution of the United States and the hourly breaching of that document itself by city and police officials. These men believe that their possession of authority not only sets them above the laws; they reserve the right to say to whom the laws shall apply, when they shall be enforced, and how.

Their ignorance is so great that if you describe them as lawbreakers they are either infuriated or rendered dumb with amazement. Mr. Whalen has been one of the dullest and most ignorant. When he took office he defended and encouraged the use of the third degree. On January 3, 1929, he reiterated the statement he made on taking office that "there's a lot of law at the end of a nightstick." At that moment he was vowing eternal war upon gangsters, gunmen, and dispensers of bad liquor. To the reporters he said "nightstick law" would be applied to this gentry, but that it would be applied "intelligently" albeit "vigorously." "They'll be knocked out cold and left to lie, Commissioner?" he was asked. "They'll be cleaned up," he replied. He had previously, according to the New York *Times*, declared that "the policemen are being sent out not necessarily to make arrests—we do not wish to clutter up the courts—but to do their duty in seeing that the known hang-outs for gunmen and the like are put out of business." Of course it never occurred to Mr. Whalen that in issuing these orders he was placing himself on the exact level of the gunmen and gangsters he was denouncing, except that he was a greater menace to society because he was a lawbreaker in high office. As William Bolitho has put it in the *World*: "Here is an honest, brave, quite unsophisticated man, with one of the finest and most complete sets of undeveloped ideas on government, law, and social ideals who has ever emerged into a position of great public trust." In no other country, we are convinced, could a public official make such a statement as Mr. Whalen's and remain in office an hour. That there was not a rising against him throughout the city shows how little understanding the public has of what are the fundamentals of civil liberty, and what are the responsibilities of a public official.

This same combination of naivete, childish ignorance, and lack of moral responsibility has also marked Mr. Whalen's dealing with the Communists. As we pointed out last week, he started out well in dealing with the demonstration of March 6. He saw to it that the Communists were given complete freedom of speech, and he had the wisdom and good sense to invite the Communist leaders to ride down with him to the City Hall and lay their complaints about unemployment before the Mayor in person. He was then living up to the best traditions of American official life. That the Communists refused to accept his invitation proved convincingly the insincerity of their intentions. When, however, the Communists illegally started their march and his police fell upon them with extraordinary brutality, Mr. Whalen was unable to see any of the wrongdoing by his officials. It was again the law at the end of the nightstick.

That, however, was by no means as bad as the Commissioner's announcement that he had called into his office the heads of various large corporations and given to them the names of 300 Communist employees so that these might be discharged—"watched" he put it later. Before he got through with this activity, he hinted, the number of those placed upon the "proscription lists" might run to thousands. Similarly amazing was his exuberance of pride in his announcement that he had sent members of the police force into the Communist demonstration who carried placards demanding the overthrow of the government and made as much noise as genuine reds, and that he had "cracked his sides with laughter" to see the uniformed police beating up their brothers in Communist guise. Here again the man's lack of an ordinary education is the trouble. He does not know that sending stool pigeons and agents provocateurs into the ranks of men whose ideas and ideals he does not like is one of the basest and most contemptible devices to which an official can resort; that it has been the trick of dictators and despots and tyrants from time immemorial, and that it never works, but only lowers the rest of the police in public estimation. That is what's wrong with Mr. Whalen. He does not know that the procedure of trying to persecute men for their beliefs is utterly un-American; he would be surprised to hear that it goes contrary to fundamental American principles, because he gives no evidence of knowing what those principles are. It is no wonder that a storm of protest has arisen; that seventeen members of the Columbia University law faculty have pointed out his lawlessness to him; that a mass meeting will be held in the Community Church to deal directly with him on March 21; and that Norman Thomas has handed in a petition to the Mayor signed by ninety-six prominent persons asking for Mr. Whalen's removal. The difficulty is that this petition must needs go to a mayor who is as ignorant of American rights and liberties as is his police commissioner; otherwise Mr. Walker would have hauled Whalen up or dismissed him long ago. And perhaps the most amazing thing about it all is the failure of either of these gentlemen to realize that this effort to proscribe Communists in legitimate employment, with the lawless refusal of one magistrate to give bail to the Communist leaders and the piling up of charges against them, is directly playing into the hands of the Communists themselves. They have no greater desire in the world than to be made the victims of official lawlessness and persecution.

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Uncle Sam, Plunger

THE Federal Farm Board has found a first-class way of throwing good money into a bottomless pit, and Congress is on the point of giving it another $100,000,000 to follow the method farther. In a letter to Governor Shafer of North Dakota on March 11, Chairman Legge made this ominous statement:

> The present operations of the Stabilization Corporation will undoubtedly result in their having upwards of 100,000,000 bushels of wheat on hand at the close of the present season, and if farmers are going ahead trying to produce an additional surplus on the basis that some way will be found to take care of it on a fair price level another year, they are going to be mistaken.
>
> If they will cooperate, the Stabilization Corporation will be justified in paying storage charges and carrying this wheat for a time in the hope that a crop shortage somewhere in the world will give them an opportunity to unload it, but if, on the other hand, the farmers' attitude is to let George do it all, the natural procedure would seem to be to dispose of this wheat the best they could and write off the loss, but doing this would probably adversely affect the price of the 1930 crop.

As a farm reliever Mr. Legge is an incomparable machinery manufacturer. The present statement shows clearly that instead of giving him an additional $100,000,000 to squander, Uncle Sam could well afford to pay him an enormous salary to go back and work for the International Harvester Company while we get any one of a hundred educated economists to run the Farm Board at say $10,000.

Three weeks ago we pointed out that despite the invincible popular superstition about the power of speculation, the price of world commodities like wheat, cotton, rubber, and sugar, to mention only a few, is determined by world conditions of production and consumption, and except as they affect those conditions other forces are only temporarily effective. Every effort at fundamental control of that price through market manipulation has ultimately resulted in disaster to the controller. Even governmental schemes that reached back toward the control of production, like British rubber-export restriction, Brazilian coffee valorization, and Cuban sugar sale, have sooner or later broken down because of inability to control production all over the world. What big business men like Mr. Legge, apparently knowing no history or economics, cannot get into their heads is that you cannot control production and prices among millions of farmers all over the world in the same way as among a half-dozen big machinery manufacturers.

The wheat crop of the world since 1923 has averaged rather more than 4,000,000,000 bushels a year, of which the United States has produced a little better than one-fifth. During the same years our exports of wheat and flour have accounted for an average of something like 200,000,000 bushels, or say one-fourth of our crop. Does Mr. Legge really imagine that the Farm Board by a wave of the wand can cut down our wheat-growing and milling industry by a quarter and keep it cut? Does not Mr. Legge know that the farmer grows wheat instead of other crops because he thinks that it pays him better? If the farmer believes that Mr. Legge is going to keep up the price, he will think that it is going to pay him relatively better yet, and he will certainly let George do it when it comes to cutting wheat acreage.

But the existing case is even worse. The wheat carry-over of the world from one crop season to the next (August 1 being taken as the date) is normally something like 300,000,000 bushels. During recent years there have been persistent attempts to hold up the price, Canadian, Hungarian, and Polish efforts being worthy of special mention. The price has apparently not been low enough to carry off the crop completely, and the carry-over, which was figured at 284,000,000 bushels in 1926, has increased each year since to 598,000,000 bushels, or twice the normal amount, on August 1 last. In the face of these facts and the resulting sharp break in wheat prices of last spring Mr. Legge now announces the purpose of the Farm Board to buy up and hold over into the next season more than 100,000,000 bushels on the chance that a crop failure somewhere may bring a fortunate outcome to this desperate gamble.

Even if the American farmer would and could restrict wheat acreage, it would do him no good; for he would simply increase the output of the other products to which he turned and therefore drive down their price, while the eager wheat growers of Argentina and Canada and Australia and India and now Russia, with its growing export capacity, would rush in and fill the void in the wheat market. What sense, then, or indeed what common honesty is there in trying to make the farmer believe that a desperate government speculation can really help him? By the very nature of his business he is unable to establish and maintain monopoly conditions, so he must make his industry profitable under world prices. He need not try to get artificial prices for what he sells, because he cannot do it, and any farm board that makes him think he can is a fake. By intelligent politics he can, however, break down artificial prices for what he buys. The Farm Board is turning his attention in the wrong direction.

$1,000 Prize!

THE *NATION* takes pleasure in announcing that the weekly *Liberty* is offering $1,000 each for the best solution of each of ten famous murder mysteries. There is the "Mystery of Arnold Rothstein," the "Mystery of the Typhoid Oyster," the "Mystery of the Wall Street Explosion," and, first and third respectively on the list of ten, the "Mystery of Sacco-Vanzetti" and the "Mystery of Thomas J. Mooney."

It is possible that even among the two million odd readers of *Liberty,* inclusion of these cases among the well-known murder "mysteries" of our time may cause some astonishment. For Thomas J. Mooney is at present serving his fourteenth year in San Quentin prison for the murder that *Liberty* lists, and Sacco and Vanzetti, the cobbler and the fish-peddler, are, for the other, dead and at peace. The Baltimore *Sun* is unkind enough to suggest that Messrs. Lowell, Stratton, Grant, and Thayer, not to mention former Governor Fuller of Massachusetts, themselves are the obvious contestants for the first prize and that Mr. Lowell of Harvard could use his share of it—$200—to raise the

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wages of the Harvard scrubwomen. Two years ago these gentlemen had not a single shadow of doubt about the guilt of Sacco and Vanzetti. They knew, beyond peradventure, beyond any qualm, as surely as though their own eyes had seen the Braintree paymaster murdered, that Sacco and Vanzetti had killed the man for whose death they were to be executed. They read the evidence that was presented to them, they heard the witnesses, they listened to what Vanzetti, the fish-peddler, said and wrote from his cell in Charlestown prison where he had spent seven years, and what Sacco, the cobbler, less articulate but not less forthright, said from his. They considered the offered alibis, the protests of respectable and disinterested persons, among them men and women of the highest standing in public life; four of them read every word of the court records, which the fifth did not read because he was present and could hear. And after they had read or heard every word and examined and sifted every fact, solemnly, advisedly, with the full knowledge that the lives of two men hung on their decision, they announced their verdict: "Guilty as charged. No doubt of it. Let them die."

It is unfortunate, if all these things happened as they must have happened, that only two years later a weekly which has never in its most reckless moments been called even faintly liberal should put these worthy gentlemen of Massachusetts in a position so truly horrible. For if doubts as to the guilt of Sacco and Vanzetti have permeated through the masses and reached a level which makes the editor of *Liberty* think these doubts news for his readers, the case is perhaps less iron-bound and copper-riveted than Messrs. Lowell, Stratton, Grant, Thayer, and Fuller knew it to be. And if this is so, what then? How can the fish-peddler and the cobbler profit by these doubts? Who can bring the dead to life and allow them to be confronted by their judges who will tell them: "We really were not quite sure after all!"

These, of course, are very unhappy considerations, and the gentlemen from Massachusetts will not be envied by any person who ponders them. But there is one man in these United States more fortunate than they. He is Governor Young of California. Tom Mooney—and Warren K. Billings, whom *Liberty* evidently overlooked—are still alive. Governor Young can still pardon them. And by doing so he can save himself bad dreams, a bad conscience, the weight on his mind and his heart of the lives of two men whom thousands of persons believe to be innocent of the crime for which they are in prison. By its "mystery" contest, *Liberty* may have done an inestimable public service.

Celluloid Aesthetics

A FEW weeks ago we had occasion to discuss the talkies with a writer attached to a very important producing company and himself the author of one of the most successful of what *Variety* calls "the articulate flickers." We propounded to him a problem in the aesthetics of the cinema and we received an answer so astonishing in its general implication that we have decided to pass it on for the benefit of those who, like ourselves, have wondered that certain things could be.

As to the problem itself, it dealt, perhaps, with matters a little overrefined, but we had just returned from seeing the talkie version of the musical comedy "Hit the Deck," and we had been struck with what seemed to us an obvious and easily remediable defect of style. Operetta, we pointed out, is, after all, a highly artificial form of art and it involves absurdities which are tolerable only because they are part of a consistent convention. Thus, in the case of the piece in question we have a story which is about not real, but musical-comedy sailors, and musical-comedy sailors are credible only when they are seen against a background equally unreal. Any theatrical producer would instinctively recognize the fact and put them in "a painted ship upon a painted ocean." But in the film everything except the story was as perversely actual as possible. The ship was literally exact; the sailors—recruited in a real recruiting office—embarked at a real navy yard; and the inevitable result was that, when they suddenly broke into a song and dance on the sidewalks of a real street, one shuddered at a crudity which might have been easily avoided by the exercise of elementary aesthetic judgment.

Now, when we propounded this opinion we expected to have it brushed aside as academic and to be told that the great public was hardly interested in considerations like these; but our friend, instead of being contemptuous, agreed perfectly. "You are right," he said. "The director who made the picture is probably just as aware as you are of the principle involved. Moreover, even audiences would, without knowing why, find pictures produced in a consistent style more enjoyable than a hodge-podge like 'Hit the Deck.' But there is one serious difficulty. Harmonious stylization—what you call a 'painted ship upon a painted ocean'—would not cost enough."

"You see," he continued, "there are three grades of pictures called respectively 'programmers,' 'features,' and 'superfeatures.' The last rent for the highest price, but in order to get it we must convince the exhibitor that the picture was expensive to make and, of course, the more conspicuous the expenditure the more easily he is convinced. We need to be able to say to him that we took the company to Shanghai, that we rented a fleet, or that we reconstructed a battleship in all its details right on the lot. He knows that things like that cost money and he is willing to pay his share, but he can't be fooled. Perhaps there is no artistic reason for going to Shanghai, perhaps a simpler setting would be better, and perhaps a picture produced less elaborately would please the audience more. But the exhibitor will not pay the price unless he knows that we have paid our part."

And so, like another ancient mariner, we were left sadder but wiser as the result of our experience with painted ships and painted oceans. We had supposed that perhaps the producers of talkies need only to learn, but we had discovered that they know already. Many are men of talent and refinement. A few at least would be glad to find some way to escape from the thousand and one limitations imposed upon their work. But every individual is lost in the huge organization, and the organization itself is controlled by social and economic factors which make impossible any effort to do anything except what has always been done. Individuals engaged in it may dream of something different, but they know that they must conform or get out. Experimentation? Unconventionality? Special pictures for the few? As one magnate is said to have said to his art director, "I can give you the answer in two words: im—possible."

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It Seems to Heywood Broun

PEOPLE who say that communism can never succeed in America have forgotten about the Elks and about Skull and Bones at Yale. In fact, it may well be that communism has already succeeded in its principal objective here. I am not denying that it may never be a very big fraternal order, but possibly that is precisely the reason why it affords its followers so much fun. One black ball is sufficient to keep an applicant out and there is no end of satisfaction in being a genuine blown-in-the-bottle Communist entirely surrounded by masses of the bourgeoisie. The paraphernalia is not unfamiliar. There are secret passwords and grips of the usual sort to be given to the initiated. This summer I understand that the club is going to go in for a hatband in addition to the fraternity pin which is worn upon the undershirt and must never be parted from the wearer. Some Communists, I assume, use the flap of flesh across the clavicle instead.

To those in good standing all sorts of jolly parties are furnished. One gets the opportunity to sing the "Internationale" twenty or thirty times a day. There are fish fries, clambakes, and gatherings at local ball parks where the good Communist may sit for several hours and listen to denunciations of God and Norman Thomas. In this I catch a slight lack of logic. According to the Communist philosophy, as I understand it, the club is against God because he doesn't exist and against Norman Thomas because he does.

The chief danger for the Communists lies not in Whalens or any outside adversaries but within the ranks of the cause itself. Palpably it is true that when three or four Communists are gathered together you have five major parties and six heresies. I know one ambitious red who is tearing himself to bits in an effort to belong to every one of the irreconcilable groups in the movement at the same time. God's children are not the only ones to have wings. Among the revolutionaries there is the left, the right, the north southwest, and the west northeast. And not one of these is on speaking terms with the rest. Orthodoxy among the Communists is far more difficult than that which obtains in the ranks of fundamentalists.

Such scary folks as actually believe that wild disorder and barricades are just around the corner overlook the fact that the Communists are much too busy to get on with the proletarian revolution of which they speak upon occasion. After all they have to save most of their time for heresy trials. In fact a truly orthodox Muscovite would rather have no upheaval at all than tolerate one sponsored under irregular auspices. If it isn't red it isn't a revolution, they say, and must be thrown back into the creek.

But what is red? Ah, there's the rub. Some part of the drive against religion is probably based on a not unnatural envy of the Catholic church and its system of government. Of course the Communists have taken over the idea of a Pope, but through their tendency to excess they have set up a round half-dozen, which throws everything completely into confusion.

Being a proletarian in good standing is no bed of roses. Probably it can't be done. There lives today in all America not one Communist whose position is unassailable. Inevitably he is a counter-revolutionist in the eyes of some comrade or other. Indeed, the rule of the order differs somewhat from that of the Boy Scouts. It is laid down that each and every one must do a daily denunciation. Of course the drive against religion has been a godsend. Here at last the club has found One to assail who cannot or will not answer back. To me a field day devoted wholly to picnic lunch and atheism sounds a little dull. After you have heard one denunciation of God it seems to me that you have heard them all. For my own part I'd a great deal rather sit and watch sparrows fall to earth.

But possibly at forty I have lost something of youthful enthusiasm. The whole movement leaves me a little wistful. Not even Princeton itself has produced so many perpetual sophomores as the Communist Party. Yet I cannot deny an occasional flash of irritation at the snobbery of this small and exclusive club. Only last night I was reading a new book by Mike Gold called "Jews Without Money," and a fascinating and spirited book at that. Mike has been called "the playboy of the Communists," but that is hardly a complete characterizer. Mr. Foster's faith that the world can be made over through his swapping wisecracks with Jimmy Walker seems to me an equally youthful concept. And if Bob Minor had remained in the newspaper business he would by now be only a sedate cartoonist drawing endless strings of fat men with dollar marks upon their clothing. To how many of us is it given to rag and wrestle with the cops after the age of forty-five?

But as I was saying, there are times when the reds seem inclined to claim too much. In Mike's "Jews Without Money" I came across a chapter called Did God Make Bedbugs? and here I found: "Bedbugs are what people mean when they say: poverty. There are enough pleasant superficial liars writing in America. I will write a truthful book of poverty; I will mention bedbugs."

As a liberal, I have not the slightest desire to limit Mike's freedom of speech, but I am a shade annoyed to find him behaving as if he had hit upon something brand-new. It is a little as if a writer said: "I am going to talk about a great actor whom nobody has ever mentioned before. I have discovered him all by myself. His name is Charlie Chaplin." Just what has Mike been doing with himself during the last twenty years of the realistic movement in American literature? I can hardly remember five native novels in all that time which did not manifest a deal of preoccupation with insect life. Nor am I pleased to have one species held out as belonging to the proletariat alone. I can assure Mike that the mascot which he mentions is by no means unheard of in the homes of the bourgeoisie. Even in the great Park Avenue apartments of the rich who oppress the poor the gentleman from the exterminator's has been known to call upon a Tuesday morning.

And in addition I accuse Mike of superficial observation. "They crawl slowly and pompously," he writes. Not in the homes of the middle class, I can assure him.

HEYWOOD BROUN

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"My Dear Senator"*

On a Certain Betrayal in Washington

MY DEAR SENATOR: To say that I am appalled by your letter of March 7 defending your action in changing your vote on the sugar tariff is to put it as politely as I can. You have been, since you were first elected, one of the truly progressive Senators in Washington. On most questions that have come before you you have taken a stand which seemed to indicate that you were conscious not merely that you were the representative of your State, but that you had a duty to the public as a whole. Yet here you are defending yourself on the ground that there are tremendous areas in the Western part of the United States available for raising sugar beets, that the sugar growers of the West are "in dire distress," and that "the industry is almost ruined." You also tell me that you promised the farmers and beet-sugar growers that if you were reelected, and the high-tariff bill should be presented, you would vote for high tariffs on products of your State even though you were opposed on principle to them. You repeat that the sugar-beet industry is highly important in your State, and that the existing tariff does not enable the sugar-beet farmers to make a living.

In other words, your argument is that although you feel there should be no tariff trough, or at least no deep and extensive one, your clients are entitled to get their feet into the swill as long as any trough exists and anybody else is feeding therein. The second Charles Francis Adams once called himself a thief because he profited by the looting of the purses of all the people of the United States through a protected industry in which he was a shareholder. If he was correct in this characterization of himself and his associates, then by your stand you are encouraging others to rob the public on behalf of an industry in your State which you admit cannot stand upon its own feet, partly because of competition in other areas under the United States flag, and partly because of the coming in of Cuban sugar. Why should you, or anybody else, seek to bolster up at the expense of all the people an industry which has no valid economic excuse for its existence? Nobody asked the citizens of your State who have gone into beet-sugar growing to put their money into that enterprise. No one guaranteed that they would make a profit out of it. They took exactly the same risks that anybody else took who established a carpet factory, or set up a brokerage house, or sought to serve his fellow-Americans by running an unpopular newspaper.

In not a single one of these cases was there any guaranty that if the investors lost their money through taking up an economically unsound venture, or through their incompetence or poor business methods, or through creating a product which no one needed, Uncle Sam would come to their rescue and guarantee them satisfactory profits. Had those who have gone into beet-sugar growing in your State since 1916 consulted a report published by the Department of Agriculture they would have found that its chemists certify that there are only three limited areas in the United States in which beets can be grown with sufficient sugar content to be commercially profitable. As for competition from other sections of the United States, would anybody listen to the boot-and-shoe manufacturers of Massachusetts if they asked for government aid against the competition of Missouri, the greatest boot-and-shoe-producing State in the Union, and California? As for Cuba, why should the mere fact that it flies a foreign flag —although its independence is severely limited by the Platt Amendment permitting us to intervene in its affairs when we see fit—deprive the American people of the opportunity to obtain cheap sugar from the richest sugar-producing territory in the world? Any sensible country would rejoice in the nearness of this island to enable it to obtain cheap sugar for its every citizen, and would be glad to include it in a customs union beneficial to both sides of the bargain. And what would happen to your beet-sugar growers if we should annex the island as so many Americans think we eventually will?

Why should you, or anyone else, seek to protect the beet growers of your own and other States from the consequences of their mistaken business judgment at the expense of every consumer in this country? They had plenty of other opportunities to invest their money, there were plenty of other crops they could raise. The world did not need an increase in sugar-producing acreage. There was plenty of cane sugar available in the world when sugar beets first began to be grown within the United States. But, I hear you ask, granted that the enterprise was a mistake, should we not protect these men from the results of their own folly and short-sightedness? My answer is emphatically *no*. Not a day goes by but that men lose their investments because of errors of judgment, or because of the ever-shifting stream of economic life and the progress of invention. The government was never asked by anybody outside of an insane asylum to reimburse the livery-stable keepers, the harness and carriage manufacturers who were put out of business when the arrival of the automobile completely changed transportation in the United States. Not a day goes by that does not witness the abandonment of some trolley tracks made financially unprofitable by the coming in of the motor bus. What would happen to the owners of worthless interurban trolley securities if they turned up in Washington and demanded that the government subsidize their lines lest they lose their capital, or reimburse them in the event that economic disaster should completely overtake them?

Can you not see that when you ask Uncle Sam to go down into his pocket to keep your particular group of sugar growers alive you are asking for special privilege at the expense of the rest of the country? Can you not see that you are creating for them a vested right, establishing a precedent which enables them to say that the government owes them a living, thus echoing the words of every worthless tramp who will not lend himself to an honest industrial task? Do you not see that in letting your vote be influenced solely by local considerations you are forgetting your duty to legislate as a

* This is the first of a series of articles on the national political situation and the issues involved in it. The next will appear in an early issue.—EDITOR THE NATION.

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representative not merely of your State, but of the entire Union? Why is it that you, usually a genuine Progressive, cannot see that when you are supporting this protective system you are committing an immoral act; that it is grossly immoral for a man to lend himself to a system which is steadily corrupting our political and economic life on the ground that as long as other people are getting graft his clients are also entitled to it? The very fact that you are dependent on these men for the votes necessary for your reelection ought forever to keep you from placing yourself in a position where you can be accused of advocating special favors for people without whose suffrages you cannot remain in public life. The very fact that you say that you are opposed on principle to high tariffs should have barred you from the position you have taken. That so many of our legislators and statesmen are willing to violate their principles in order to help out some good fellows at home explains in high degree why our political life has sunk so low as it has. That you made this a pledge when you were elected does not avail to excuse you; for in your letter to me you explain your change of vote by saying that as long as you stay in the Senate you expect to change your vote when your judgment teaches you that you owe it to the people you represent to do so. Your willingness to lay yourself open to suspicion and misconstruction by your recent switch shows that you have the moral courage to change your position under fire. You could have done so after reaching Washington and seeing all the rotten mess of crookedness and corruption, of log-rolling, wire-pulling, and vote-buying that has disgraced the Senate throughout a year of tariff-making. I cannot, with all respect, but feel that if you had been true to yourself, to the statesmanship which you have displayed heretofore, you would have resigned from the Senate rather than put yourself in so equivocal a position and lend yourself to this whole business of tariff robbery into which the Congress has plunged itself, only to fall lower than ever before in the history of tariff-making.

The very fact that you are a Progressive ought to enable you to see clearly that the forces which are behind this tariff swinery are the same forces which menace democracy at every other turn. The high-tariff protectionists are also our imperialists, our big-army people, our big-navy people, our shipbuilding people who hire the Shearers to thwart the desire of the American people for disarmament and peace. They are the same persons who are buying up water powers by hook and by crook, overcharging the American people through their utilities, padding their capital accounts, and poisoning the well-springs of our national life by their dishonest and under-cover propaganda in our schools and colleges. They are the same people who by fair means and foul—usually foul—are seeking to emasculate the Federal Trade Commission, the Federal Power Commission, the Interstate Commerce Commission, all the State and federal regulatory commissions by packing them with their own creatures—as has again just been brought out beyond question or doubt by any honest citizen because of the inquiries which have been going on under your eyes in Washington. These are the same powers that are sworn foes of liberalism and progressivism—the same progressivism for which you have stood and fought so bravely. They are the ones responsible for the packing of the Supreme Court by conservatives, for the tremendous cliques in this country by which all the wealth of the country is being concentrated more and more in the hands of a few. They are the ones who figured in the oil scandals, who debauched one Cabinet, if not one President of the United States.

Wherever they move in their pursuit of special privilege they leave behind them a sinister trail of corruption. They employ the Grundys. They finance the Vares and the Smiths and the other men who have sought to buy their way into the Senate of the United States. There is the enemy! Yet you who have fought them so often have now lowered your lance and struck hands with them. Can you not see that in doing so you have debarred yourself from speaking out again effectively against their other raids upon the Treasury, their unceasing efforts to secure for themselves the natural resources, the birthright of the American people? Why are you so blind now? Can you complain if people ask whether it is merely because you wish to get a few thousand dollars for the lumber men and the beet growers of your State? It is, of course, impossible for you not to know the outright corruption going on under your own eyes in this tariff-making. The swapping of votes in order to obtain favors for both sides is none the less corruption even though no money changes hands. It is corruption for the party leaders to award tariff favors to men who contributed to their campaign funds, because that makes the transaction merely one of bargain and sale. It is corruption, as well as pure folly, to permit interested persons to frame the nation's tariff policy. Yet, viewing all this, you, too, are willing to enter this shameful scramble to get something for your State. This is not service, but a grave disservice to your people.

I am certain, knowing you as I do, that the motive in your case has not been fear for your political future, but kindness of heart. But kindness of heart can never be an excuse for going over to the powers that prey and demanding your State's share of the loot. Kindness of heart cannot free you from the duty of going to the bottom of these economic problems that are obviously menacing not merely the prosperity and the happiness of our people, but their freedom of opportunity, their spiritual and economic equality, their right to the heritage of their fathers. What hope can there be for the growth of the Progressive movement when a man like you lends himself to such folly and such error?

For thirty-three years I have been observing and writing on public affairs and what has been happening in Washington. Never has there been such a moral debacle, never such base selfishness, and never such cowardly opportunism as are to be found today in the headless Washington of which you are so distinguished a part. Never in these thirty-three years has there been a greater opportunity for a man to stand forth, to burn his bridges behind him, to forget his clients and their narrow State interests, and to declare that he is taking his stand, come what may, for the welfare of all the people, for the advancement of his country, for its protection against the flood of slimy corruption which appears to have touched nearly every institution that we hold dear. When such a man appears the country will acclaim him. It will recognize his righteousness. Yes, it will receive him with open arms if he declares that no power on earth, much less the plight of some farmers and lumber men in his State, can swerve him from his beliefs or make him legislate for anyone else than the entire people of the United States. For such a one there will be no office too high, and no gratitude too great.

Yours very truly,

OSWALD GARRISON VILLARD

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The Miners' Rebellion

By LOUIS STANLEY

Springfield, March 17

FROM the picks came some 450 miners to Springfield, Illinois, on March 10 to reorganize the United Mine Workers of America. Over in Indianapolis John L. Lewis, still claiming to be president of the union, presided over what he called "the thirty-first consecutive constitutional convention." The "All-High," as the miners like to call Lewis, had been defied. The men had at last broken out in open rebellion.

The immediate causes of the revolt are not such as to arouse the deep interest of a progressive, nor did they play the most important part at the Springfield convention. The basic reasons were continually heard, however: the tyranny of John L. Lewis and his callousness to, if not collusion in, the running down of the union. The direct reasons for the present outbreak concern the feud that has existed for years between the officials of Illinois District 12, the richest district in the United Mine Workers of America, and the International administration headed by Lewis. The conflict existed during the regime of Lewis's most formidable rival, Frank Farrington, former president of District 12, whom Lewis eliminated four years ago when he revealed that Farrington had signed a three-year contract, while he was still holding office in the union, to serve as labor adviser to the Peabody Coal Company at $25,000 a year. The antagonism between Illinois and Indianapolis continued under the presidency of Harry Fishwick, who succeeded Farrington.

Last year Lewis seized the opportunity to obtain a foothold in Illinois. His investigators discovered irregularities in the transfer of real estate belonging to two local unions in Franklin County in southern Illinois. The officials of Subdistrict 9 were implicated but defied the International office. Thereupon Lewis revoked the charter of the subdistrict on June 8, 1929, and appointed "provisional officers." Inquiry revealed that the accused officials had also misappropriated $10,500 out of $50,000 intended for groceries to relieve members during the strike of 1927. In the meantime another incident took place. George Stouffer, of Peoria, was declared elected a member of the district board by the official tellers. His opponent claimed the election stolen from him, appealed in vain to the district board, and finally obtained a decision unseating Stouffer from the International executive board.

Charges and counter-charges were flying about and matters had been made worse by the refusal of the district officials to support Denny Lewis, brother of John L. Lewis, for reappointment as State Director of Mines and Minerals, when Lewis struck another blow. The *United Mine Workers' Journal* of October 1 published a memorandum signed by the International officers giving the details of a confession made by two of the deposed officials of Subdistrict 9. Among other interesting items were included charges of corruption against district officers and their leading attorney and the proof that the administration of District 12 had materially supported the fight of the accused men against Lewis. A. C. Lewis, chief counsel for the district, filed suit for $250,000. Later Harry Madden, a district-executive-board member, did likewise.

The district board met in session at Springfield on October 5 and threw down the gauntlet. They refused to recognize the provisional government set up in Subdistrict 9, and instead parceled out the territory among adjoining subdistricts. They refused to abide by the decision in the Stouffer case. They refused to disavow the libel suit of A. C. Lewis. As a consequence, on October 10 President Lewis revoked the charter of District 12 and established a provisional government. The victory was short-lived. The Illinois officials were prepared for this contingency and obtained an injunction the same day they received the order from Lewis. On January 23 the plea of the International to have the injunction dissolved was denied. The case will be heard on appeal next month.

In all this the officials of District 12 had not been placed in the most favorable light. It is true that they argued that provisional governments were unconstitutional, that their decision in the Stouffer case was founded on formal considerations, and that Lewis had no right to dictate to them as to libel suits. It is also true that their battle was against Lewis; this was their strongest point. Nevertheless, the squabbling seemed to be factional. The membership of District 12 was dissatified with corruption. The rank and file in other districts could be only mildly aroused. Something had to be done to turn the struggle into one over principles rather than office; something had to be done to make the fight national rather than local in scope. For the sake of self-preservation District 12 took the next step. Quick action was needed. A conference took place in Chicago in February. The constitution of the United Mine Workers, we were reminded, had lapsed by its own limitation on March 31, 1929. The referendum extending it, taken in November, 1928, had no validity. Therefore the conferees, as an "organization committee," issued a ringing call for a convention of the United Mine Workers to be held at Springfield, Illinois, on March 10 at twelve o'clock noon.

The promise of reorganization that the call held forth lay in the names attached to it. There were Alexander Howat, president, and August Dorchy, vice-president of the Kansas District. Both had fought the industrial-court law of that State and had been expelled from the union by Lewis for their pains. There was John H. Walker, president of the Illinois State Federation of Labor, a substantial, respectable addition to the ranks, who had had his tiffs with Lewis years before. There was John Brophy, incorrigible idealist, driven from the union by Lewis and now a salesman for the Columbia Preserve Company, noted for its liberal labor policy. There was also Adolph Germer, secretary of the Socialist Party during the war, supposed to have had his election as president of District 12 taken from him at one time by Farrington and Lewis. More recently he has been a real-estate agent, though his membership in the union has never lapsed. The other signatures to the call were chiefly

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those of officials of District 12. Conspicuous for its absence was the name of Frank Farrington, recently reinstated to membership and in the forefront of the anti-Lewis campaign. This was a concession to the progressives and the sentiment of the rank and file. Behind all this maneuvering was Oscar Ameringer, genius of the Oklahoma *Leader* and the *Illinois Miner,* known to the miners as "Adam Coaldigger," his nom de plume. It was he who through his papers stirred the workers to open rebellion. It was he who achieved the national progressive front.

The Springfield convention did not open at noon on March 10, for Lewis had decided to call a convention also at ten o'clock of the same day. Upon the advice of lawyers the Springfield group met at nine o'clock. At 11:21 the portions of the constitution providing for the name and jurisdiction of the union were adopted. At 12:01 the Indianapolis convention legalized the extension of the constitution. The insurgents might now call the others dual by virtue of a forty-minute margin. The courts, however, will have the final word.

The gathering at Springfield was in the main a rank-and-file convention. The delegates drove President Fishwick of District 12 from the chair immediately after he had opened the convention. By acclamation they chose their "Alec" Howat to take his place. Throughout the entire proceedings parliamentary rules were given but the most casual attention; the rank and file had its say. At the beginning the officials of District 12 were denounced, but the chief target was, of course, John L. Lewis himself. Man after man told stories of his arrogance, his high-handedness, his neglect of the unorganized, and his sympathy for the operators. His henchmen, the organizers and the International-board members, were proved guilty of extravagance, corruption, indifference to the needs of the workers, and the expenditure of time on political work for their chief.

The big issue of the convention was the seating of Frank Farrington. "I made the contract," he asserted in his defense, "to save the miners' union." Delegates laughed out loud. He tried to explain that Lewis would not agree to the wage reduction needed to halt the disintegration of the union unless he, Farrington, had eliminated himself from the organization. He signed the Peabody contract with that in view. Very few, indeed, believed his story, but he was seated nevertheless by a vote of 225 to 145. The majority argued that his credential was correct in form and that if he wanted to rehabilitate his honor, he should be allowed to do it. Anyway, both John Brophy and Powers Hapgood, Harvard graduate who had shown his fearlessness in fighting both Lewis and the operators, were at the moment not even members of the union and represented unorganized groups, yet they opposed the seating of Farrington. The victory of Farrington was a deep disappointment to the progressives, who had hoped that the "reorganization convention" would be more sensitive to ethical considerations.

The election of officers was another test of the progressive character of the convention. It was a foregone conclusion that "Alec" would be elected president and "Jack" Walker secretary-treasurer. The former lacked the vigor of his earlier years; the latter, a conservative, might lack driving power in the trying months ahead. Much might devolve upon the vice-president. Hapgood and Germer were the contestants. The progressives pinned their hope on the younger man. They were disappointed again. His youth, his attack on Farrington, and his advanced ideas were against him. He was defeated by a vote of 299 to 95, but a moment later he was again the hero, when he shook hands with Germer and moved the delegates by his appeal for solidarity. Afterwards Hapgood was given a personal tribute, when the convention voted for a substitute motion of his, less because of its merits than to please him.

Was the convention encouraging? It was. A house-cleaning is probable in District 12 and Farrington may be kept out of the picture. The constitution adopted makes the officials more responsive to the rank and file. The salaries of officials are comparatively low. If Hapgood was not elected vice-president, still the officials chosen are of the highest caliber. Besides, Hapgood and Bill Deak, rebel in John L. Lewis's local, were elected to the important policy committee. Almost all of Illinois, Kansas, and the Southwest are with the "reorganized" union, and that means most of the bituminous coal miners in the United Mine Workers. If the American Federation of Labor recognizes the Springfield United Mine Workers, the union will throw its influence to the side of militant struggle against the employers and in favor of progressive policies. The constitution commits the union to advocate the six-hour day, the five-day week, unemployment insurance, and "the full social value of their [the workers'] product." If the American Federation of Labor bans the new union, it may, with the Amalgamated Clothing Workers, become the nucleus of a new trade-union center.

Much depends upon "Adam Coaldigger." As editor of the official organ which will succeed the *Illinois Miner* he will have a tremendous educational job to fulfil. As the generalissimo of the national progressive front he can do much to preserve and strengthen it. The extent to which progressives, militants, and rebels are permitted to function in the affairs of the "reorganized" United Mine Workers will determine whether we shall have just another business union or a fighting machine run by practical idealists—unless, of course, a peace is patched up between the old and the new unions.

Two Swans I Watched at Twilight

By DAVID MORTON

These slow and silver images of peace
Might well be pictures that the mind had wrought
Out of some tortured labor at release
From the dark chambers of tormented thought;
So tranquil and so dim and cool they are,
Here in the gathering darkness they would seem
Part of this dusk that gazes, star by star,
Out of its own reflection in the stream.

The twilight thickens, now—the deeper dark
Will settle here, and silver ghosts will stir
So slightly that no mortal eye could mark
Their going or the silver shape they were,
That came in beauty and in beauty went,
For one who knew the thing their passing meant.

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Old Joe's Senate

By PAUL Y. ANDERSON

Washington, March 15

NOT since the Harding days has Washington been permeated by such an atmosphere of scandal and impending scandal. Administration leaders have the furtive and uneasy look of men who fear their enemies and distrust each other. Dreadful rumors fill the air. Many of them concern the methods by which the tariff bill is being revised skyward under the practiced and unscrupulous hand of "Old Joe" Grundy, and an equal number concern the real or suspected relations between public personages and the power and chemical interests. Already it has been disclosed that immediately prior to his election as national chairman of the Republican Party, the delectable Claudius H. ("Deuce-in-the-Hole") Huston participated in a lobby that aimed to grab Muscle Shoals for the American Cyanamid and Union Carbide companies; that he collected, from sources that he cannot entirely recall, and disbursed, in ways that he cannot always remember, very large sums of money without keeping any record except in a check book, which he now seems to have mislaid; and that he sought to effect an arrangement whereby the power and chemical companies would quit quarreling over the anticipated plunder and agree to divide it like honest pirates. Moreover, he solicited and received for the lobby contributions totaling $36,000 from the Union Carbide, and deposited the money to his private account with a brokerage firm, subsequently forwarding it to the lobby organization in amounts and on dates that have now escaped his mind. In fact, the condition of Mr. Huston's memory on these matters provokes one to wonder whether he is a sleepwalker.

* * * * *

IN this connection the Senate Lobby Investigating Committee, which already has performed invaluable services, is being urged to examine the records of the Cyanamid and Carbide companies and to scan their lists of stockholders. In connection with proposals to dispose of Boulder Dam power, it might well inspect the books and correspondence of the Southern California Edison and affiliated companies. In respect to the inexplicable increase in the tariff on rayon, it certainly should ascertain the names of American stockholders in the favored companies, especially those controlled by Courtaulds, Ltd., of London. Senator Blaine of Wisconsin has publicly asked for an inquiry into the activities of the Mormon hierarchy in connection with the sugar vote in the Senate. In short, if events were to justify one-half the whispers now generally current in the capital, we might look back on the Fall-Daugherty-Forbes regime as the Age of Honest Government.

* * * * *

WHEN news dispatches relating the progress of the tariff fight will not stand up between editions of the afternoon papers, any attempt to indicate events three or four days ahead is wholly futile. As this is written, the Senate Old Guard is in the saddle again, as the result of an audacious vote-trading conspiracy hatched by Grundy and his private lobby. Employing the style of attack made famous by Chinese generals, the Pennsylvania statesman and his aides have inspired enough desertions to reduce the coalition from a majority to a minority. It now appears that this might have been accomplished long ago if the Old Guard leaders had only known that so many votes were for sale, and at such reasonable prices. It may sound ridiculous to attribute any form of innocence to Jim Watson, Reed Smoot, or George Moses, but actually I do not believe they realized that Dill and Jones could be reached with promises of a duty on lumber, or Pine and Thomas with pledges of a duty on oil, or that Ashurst and Hayden could be lined up with a few kind words about hides. Evidently they did not detect the rubber in the convictions of Wagner, Copeland, and Tydings. It took a realist like "Old Joe" to size up the condition and devise the proper measures. Assisted by Warren F. Doane, a professional lobbyist on the joint pay roll of Grundy, the Manufacturers' Club of Philadelphia, and the State of Pennsylvania, who occupies an office in the Senate Office Building, "Old Joe" soon had the situation well in hand. Since then he has made but two mistakes: the first, when he fell into a panic and attempted to deceive the Senate about Doane's status; the second, when he essayed publicly to lead the fight for a higher duty on pig iron. In the latter instance he discovered that Senators who were quite willing to go along with him when the connection was not too obvious were unwilling to commit political suicide by openly accepting his leadership. Next time "Old Joe" will let someone else wear the sword and epaulets while he directs the battle from the cloakroom. A Progressive Senator remarked ruefully the other day: "The worst mistake we ever made was to exclude Bill Vare."

* * * * *

NEVERTHELESS, brilliant careers are sometimes short, and the convening of the next Congress might easily find "Old Joe" again paying rent for himself and his lobby in a private office building, and conducting his operations from the corridors instead of the cloakrooms. When the Honorable Jim Davis was first suggested (by himself) as a candidate for the Senatorial nomination against Grundy, there was a general disposition to smile—perhaps because people have always smiled at the spectacle of Jim as Secretary of Labor. The smile vanished instantly when Vare declared for him. Even the mighty Mellons have learned that it is folly to laugh at any Pennsylvania candidate who has the support of the Philadelphia machine. In this instance the folly would be fatuity, because the consequences of the last Senatorial primary in that State will prevent any more orgies of spending in the near future, and when money is scarce organization support is doubly effective. As a matter of fact, genial Jim has many of the attributes of a successful campaigner. Not only is he the greatest Moose known to natural history, but he is also a Mason, an Odd Fellow, an Elk, a Knight of Pythias, and a dues-paying member of the American Federation of Labor.

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He is a tireless and accomplished handshaker, and the only living Cabinet member who ever told the British Ambassador that the Embassy victuals would go down better with a scoop of beer. He radiates energy and good nature, and if an idea ever entered his head it perished there of loneliness. In other words, he is a perfect candidate, and I should be neither surprised nor disappointed to see him give "Old Joe" a noble licking. To be sure, he would add nothing to the Senate, but he would supplant an evil influence that never should have been admitted.

* * * * *

WHERE the tariff is concerned, it begins to appear that Mr. Hoover's failure to indicate by word or sign the kind of bill he desired may not have been so amateurish after all. Throughout the various stages of the fight —when the House was adopting the most piratical rates in history, when the Senate coalition was weeding out some of the grosser larcenies, and now when Grundy's Gang is restoring most of them—there have been two equally authoritative groups of Hoover spokesmen, one declaring that the President wanted the sort of bill the coalition sought, and the other declaring he desired the sort of bill that Grundy is writing. Mr. Hoover's refusal to settle the issue between them may now bear fruit. I venture to forecast that no matter what form the bill finally takes, it will prove to be the very bill that he wanted all along, and that its enactment in the form in which it is enacted will be hailed as vindicating his leadership. Calvin knew a thing or two.

SENATOR COUZENS, as bland and guileless as when he induced an unsuspecting Old Guard last year to authorize his sweeping investigation of the communications and power industries, has now introduced a bill to regulate the interstate power industry. He will not succeed in slipping this one through: it has too much dynamite—and the Power Trust has too many eyes. In addition to creating a permanent Federal Power Commission, the bill would provide for regulation of interstate power on such a scale, and with such powers, as the Interstate Commerce Commission rightly seeks in connection with railroad regulation. It would extend this regulation not only to the producers, transmitters, and distributors of interstate power, but also to holding and management companies of all kinds and their affiliated companies. It would compel all of them to submit their books to regular inspection. In brief, it would enable the federal government at last to ascertain the full extent of the partially hidden profits of the power industry, in so far as it engages in interstate commerce, and to restrict them to decent limits, a thing no government authority now has the power to do. The necessity of such legislation needs no argument, but the bill will pass, if it passes at all, only after a terrific battle, because it is designed to end what Senator Howell has called "the fattest form of public-utility graft that ever existed in this country." The undisturbed enjoyment of such a graft will not be surrendered without fighting—in both the Chinese and American styles.

Being Right with Babson

By RALPH WEST ROBEY

MONDAY is proverbially blue and Friday notoriously unlucky. Thursday, however, is the worst day for Wall Street. On that day too many financial data are given out to make it comfortable for those interested in stock prices. Thursday afternoon the figures on brokers' loans and the condition statement of the Federal Reserve Bank are made public. It is also on that day that any change in the rediscount rate is announced. It is, in other words, a day when the stock market is in no mood for jesting and a time when one should be careful of what he says, especially if his words may be interpreted in any unfavorable light.

Despite these considerations, it was on a Thursday that Roger W. Babson made his most famous prediction. On Thursday, September 5, 1929, he foretold a drop in stock prices of sixty to eighty points. It was not, of course, Babson's first prophecy, for his principal business for many years has been to read the future for business men. It was not, by some hundreds, his first statement on the future of stock prices. In fact, it was not, by some scores, even his first prediction that stock prices were going to decline. For some reason, however, the statement was given a most unusual amount of publicity for a Babson prediction. The telegraphic news services rushed it all over the country, and the newspapers shortly were giving it even more space than they normally accorded a statement by Secretary Mellon on the fundamental soundness of American business. Even the stock market supposedly took notice of the forecast and stopped its tiresome upward movement to pay Babson a rare compliment by being very weak for a day or two, thus attracting further attention to the prediction.

Actually, the market never did get back into its old swing, and two weeks later, to the day, it reached its high for all time. On this latter date, Thursday, September 19, the twenty-five securities used by the New York *Times* as its index of industrial stock prices reached the astounding average of $469 a share. From this level there began a recession which in five weeks carried prices down to almost $400 a share. After this all orderliness in the decline disappeared and in three weeks industrial shares dropped in value almost 50 per cent, or to $221 on November 13. At this point it was only natural that many individuals should recall Babson's prophecy of a few weeks earlier. The difficulty was that he had not supported his prediction by arguments sufficiently strong to make one take him seriously. Dozens of people had been preaching lower stock prices for some years.

Many of them had given far better reasons than the one vouchsafed by Babson: "Thus far there have been few deaths among those with very large stock holdings. Before long these men will begin to die and their holdings will be put on the market." After the panic one might maintain that he had not followed Babson because he had not believed that Babson possessed any special information on the death-

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rate of large security owners, but that kind of rationalization could provide only limited consolation. The fact remained that anyone who had adopted his point of view and had got out of the market was much better off than many of the rest of us. In any event, Babson soon became the lion among stock-market prognosticators. It was only a matter of days until he was writing for one of the New York evening papers, which placarded the subways with the slogan "Be Right with Babson." This latter was a distinct victory for him, and since he likes to include in his business-forecasting service a substantial amount of religious sentiment, it must have been a source of regret that the slogan was not joined with the old hymn "Get Right with God."

Most of those who thus adopted Babson as their guiding light probably were not more than casually familiar with the method followed by him in his prognostications. As so-called scientific methods of forecasting go, however, it is relatively simple. In his words:

> Our forecast of future events is based on the assumption that the law of action and reaction applies to economics and human relations, en masse, as it applies to mechanics. Thus we assume that abnormal depression *must* follow abnormal activity; that lower prices *must* follow higher prices or vice versa; and that we as classes or nations must ourselves get what we give and must prosper as we serve.

The "law of action and reaction" is the thing. And, as understood by Babson, it has a delightful universality. For example:

> Don't try to force yourself to "love God." Just accept the great truth that God loves you and is anxious to have you well, useful, and happy. Leave the rest to the law of action and reaction.

Or, in discussing the changing styles in women's dresses:

> . . . we have concluded that women will accept the longer skirt, due to the fundamental law of action and reaction.

That there is a certain basic accuracy in this "law" goes without saying. Even small boys playing in the streets frequently refer to it, although among them it is stated in less technical language, such as, "What goes up must come down." Nevertheless, it all amounts to the same thing, except in the breadth of its applicability. Many people believe that when it is applied to economic phenomena, the points when business or prices will start up or down and how far they will go in either direction are much more difficult to determine than if one is swinging a pendulum in a physics laboratory or throwing pebbles into the air. Doubtless Babson himself thinks of this from time to time, for he has not always during the years that are past been so fortunate in his predictions as he was with that of September 5.

Babson's predictions on general business, however, are of no interest for the present. Here we are concerned only with his forecasts on stock prices or, more accurately, with his prophecies since 1926. By so limiting the discussion it is possible to compare his statements and advice with actual events and thereby furnish a possible explanation for the general skepticism with which his September prognostication was received. For this purpose it is well to recall that stock prices made a substantial advance between the latter part of 1921 and the first of 1926. For the twenty-five industrials of the *Times* index the increase was from $67 a share on August 24, 1921, to $184 a share on February 10, 1926. During the rest of February of the latter year and throughout March prices receded until on March 30 the average was only $139 a share. This decline, obviously, was extremely severe when considered on a percentage basis. In fact, until the recent panic the March, 1926, break was frequently referred to as the worst thing that had happened to the market in many years.

Babson, however, did not think that the decline had gone far enough to create any real stock bargains. Thus, after stocks floundered between $140 and $150 a share during April and May, 1926, we find him praising in the following words those of his clients who were following his "system":

> . . . those who are using their funds according to the long-swing-area method are now holding their capital in liquid form in order to have it intact when the right buying period arrives. The Babson chart now indicates that this is the correct policy.

On the date of this statement, June 8, 1926, the average price of the twenty-five industrials was $151. The following day they held steady and then started upon an upward movement. But this could not fool Babson and a week later he explained the rise as being "due to short covering and so-called 'investment' buying." He also went ahead in the same letter to advise his clients to "continue to hold their funds in good liquid condition to the extent that they wish to participate in the next major stock-market movement." The market still continued to move slightly upward and Babson strengthened his advice by telling his followers on June 29 that they "should take advantage of the strong spots" for getting out of the market. Within a week after this the market made its little courtesy to the 150's and moved on to better levels.

For the rest of the year the rate of increase in stock prices was not rapid, but gradually they climbed until by the middle of December, 1926, the average was $180. Babson, in the meantime, continued to advise his clients to stay out of the market. At times, in fact, he became almost insulting to those who might have differed with him, as, for example, on September 7 when he said "no sane investor" would "be loaded up with stocks at such a time." By May, 1927, the average of the industrials was more than $200, or some 25 per cent above their level at the time of the first advice noted above. Babson thought there would be "wonderful opportunities later" and that it was no time to buy. From May to September prices continued their advance. In October there was a slight reaction but by the end of November the industrials were up to $241 a share. It was at this time that Babson issued a letter giving Twelve Points in 1928 Business. The fourth among these referred to the stock market and said that "any major movement should be on the downward side." This, it will be noted, was his blanket forecast for the whole of 1928. As the year progressed he continuously bombarded his subscribers with the gospel that they must keep out of the market, that they should buy bonds, that "the writing is on the wall," that it was the "time for even the most thoughtless to stop, look, and listen," and that it was "only common sense to be pre-

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pared for a reaction." In the meantime the market boiled, and on January 2, 1929, the twenty-five industrials closed at $338 a share.

Obviously, it is not worth while going ahead. Babson continued to issue his bearish statements and the market continued upward, finally reaching $469 a share. Babson followers enjoyed none of this general average advance of 330 points, for they had been out of the market since early in 1926, except for the stocks especially recommended by Babson from time to time. It is only fair to give Babson credit for these special recommendations, for they constituted exceptions to his general bearish position. Babson himself appears to have been rather proud of the selections. Evidence of this pride is provided by a special circular issued December 3, 1928, giving the list of such recommendations as "a summary of what the Babson Statistical Organization has done for its clients." The list is too long to be given in full but a sample may be of interest, for, as was stated, "the list speaks for itself."

During the period July to November, 1928, seven securities were recommended, as follows: Anaconda Common at $67.75; Beacon Oil Common at $20; Louisville Gas and Electric, Class A, at $38; Pacific Gas and Electric Common at $47.75; Philadelphia and Reading Coal and Iron at $30; Pierce Petroleum Common at $4; and White Eagle Oil at $30. Had one bought one hundred shares of each of these at the price suggested they would have cost a total of $23,750. Had the whole lot been sold at the time of the general low of the stock market, November 13, 1929, they would have brought $19,412, or 18 per cent below what they had cost. On the other hand, if instead of following these special recommendations an investor on July 2, 1928, had purchased an equal number of shares of each of the twenty-five industrials used by the *Times* and had sold them at the bottom of the market, November 13, 1929, he would have lost only 13 per cent of his capital. Theoretically, therefore, since the twenty-five industrials were presumably selected because they are representative of the whole market and not because they offered any special investment or speculative opportunities, the Babson follower was more than 25 per cent worse off than the foolish speculator who tossed a coin to see what he should buy.

It is very probable that Babson would contest the fairness of this comparison on the basis that his followers bought their securities outright and consequently did not sell at the low of the market. This is a thoroughly legitimate point of view. Unfortunately for Babson it does not help much in the present instance, for if our hypothetical Babson investor was still holding the seven securities on March 11, 1930, they were worth then $25,025, or 5 per cent more than they had cost. Contrasted with this is the position of the one who theoretically tossed a coin. His stocks on March 11 were worth 29 per cent more than he had paid for them.

Such are the facts. Yet they should not cause Babson any embarrassment, for as he said in his letter of July 3, 1928: "For profits made we give ourselves credit; for losses we blame circumstances." Perhaps this frankness is sufficient solace for his more faithful followers. Others may wonder if he was not really serious back in June, 1928, when he advised: "Clients who own farms with good green pasture which is idle should consider goose-raising."

How Digging Began

By ANNE KIMBALL TUELL

THE sound conservative who prefers to think of a world finished once for all, warranted not to move or to develop, might find satisfaction in exhuming a forgotten Eden tale of the early sixteenth century, innocently known, or rather unknown, as Barclay's "Fifth Eclogue." Here is to be recovered an account of creation at least as static as the one in the narrative of Holy Writ, with additional reassurance concerning the final and divine ordinance for existing classes. There is in the rugged lines no notion at all of irony, but they present with naive and unconscious daring a theory of social origins as diverting as the mind of Anatole France could contrive for the race of penguins, a comfortable creed for the easier centuries before the voice of Demos was heard in the land. Shorn of rough spelling and uncouth word the story sounds still with the simplicity of days "when Adam delved and Eve span." There is no moral issue, no subtle serpent, no fall from obedience. At least one version of the universe, we are happy to find, has made no attempt to justify the ways of God to man. The earning of bread by hard means is but the result of a mistake. Eve of course was to blame.

The beginning reads like the story as we know it:

> First when the world was formed in creation,
> And Adam and Eve were set in their station,
> Our Lord conjoined them both as man and wife,
> To live in accord the season of their life.

By this genial version our Father Adam had in Eden a very happy family, for God

> Commanded mankind to multiply,
> By generation to get them progeny.

And the generation of a healthy race was no curse, no hard doom for the multiplication of sorrow. It was the joyous business of Eden. Eve did not shrink from her responsibilities. She liked her children well. Nor is there more than hint of a tragic apple. (We might all be united today as far as the apple was concerned.) Moreover, labor was pleasant in Eden till the fatal visit of the Lord of Creation, which turned quite accidentally into a visitation:

> The while that Adam was pitching of the fold,
> Eve was at home and sat on the threshold,
> With all her babies and children her about,
> Either in her lap within or else without.
> Now had she pleasure them hugging and kissing,
> And then was she busy them cleaning and combing.

All was joy till the coming of the Creator and the division of the children of men:

> At last our Lord upon the fifteenth year,
> To Eve, our mother, did on a time appear.

Misfortune struck, as it always does, on a pleasant day. Eve had just been especially happy with her babies—busy, by a custom which one can bear to find obsolete, "with butter to anoint their necks," but alas!

> In the meantime, while she was occupied,
> Our Lord drawing near she suddenly espied.

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Eve was very naturally in a flutter. And here, too, as in Genesis, she was ashamed, but only at the size of her family. Hence her scramble and ill-advised concealment. For it must be confessed that there was in the mother of all women a certain disingenuousness about her children:

> And all ashamed, as fast as ever she might,
> She hasted and hid some of them out of sight,
> Some under hay, some under straw and chaff,
> Some in the chimney, some in a tub of draff.
> But such as were fair and of their stature right,
> As wise and subtle reserved she in sight.

We cannot wonder at her nervousness. "The Father and Lord omnipotent" appeared to be a variable and arbitrary God, a combination of Caliban and Cheeryble brothers. One could not be sure of suiting Him. But He came this day in a mood wholly benevolent—just to see the children and, as is the wont of visitors, to give them something. And He said:

> "Woman, let me thy children see.
> I come to promote each in his degree."

Eve was not unnaturally "amazed," but hurried forward her most presentable.

> God on them smiled and them comforted so,
> As we with birds and dogs used to do.

He is a God who likes pretty children; and the gifts are forthcoming straightway, no less than "the honors belonging to mankind":

> At last to the most old of all
> He said, "Have thou the scepter of Rome imperial.
> Thou art the eldest. Thou shalt have most honor.
> Justice requireth that thou be emperor."
> Then to the second He said, "It is seeming
> That thou be exalted to the honor of a king."
> And unto the third He gave such dignity
> To guide an army and noble duke to be.

And so forth to the others as they were in degree. According to the original divine plan, apparently, everybody was to lord it in some fashion over everybody else.

Eve, delighted at the unlimited shower of benefactions, grieved as well she might for the unlucky children tucked away—a whole troupe of little Esaus. Was there to be no blessing for them? Without stopping to consider their appearance, she made haste to drag them from their hiding places. If they had not been prepossessing to begin with, they were not improved by their late experience:

> Their hair was rugged and powdered all with chaff,
> Some full of straws, some others full of draff,
> Some with cobwebs and dust were so arrayed
> That one beholding them might be afraid.

And the temper of the Lord was changed as He beheld them:

> Our Lord smiled not on them to show His pleasure,
> But said to them with troubled countenance,
> "Ye smell all smoky, of stubble and of chaff,
> Ye smell of the ground, of weeds, and of draff."

There are no gifts for such dirty children as these. The Lord has a daintier sense for the fitness of things, though He is as anxious as Milton's God about His reputation for omnipotence:

> "I shall not, although I well can,
> Of a foul villein make a gentleman."

And so the curse descended—the curse at last, though only upon a limited number of the children of men:

> "Ye shall be ploughmen and tillers of the ground;
> To pain and labor shall ye always be bound.
> Some shall keep oxen, and some shall hogs keep,
> To dig and to delve, to hedge and to dyke,
> Take this for your lot and other labor like.
> To drudge and to drivel in works vile and rude,
> This wise shall ye live in endless servitude.
> To stoop and to sweat and subject to become,
> And never to be rid of bondage and thraldom."

There was to be no nonsense, no compounding with strikes:

> Then bade He them be tough,
> And never to grudge at labor or at pain,
> For if they did so, it should be thing in vain.

Alas for the digger and delver!

> Thus said the Lord and Father omnipotent,
> And then He ascended up into the firmament.

In the Driftway

SNAKE stories are circulated by the Florida press in winter with the same avidity and gusto with which tales of sea serpents are printed by newspapers in the North in summer. It might seem that in this age of unbelief both sets of yarns would gradually die of anemia and malnutrition, but fortunately for the amusement of the human race there seems to be no immediate danger of such a catastrophe. At least the 1930 crop seems to be without blight or blemish, for in spite of the presence in the orange groves of what Florida newspapers call for short the "Medfly," the St. Petersburg *Evening Independent* reports that the snake-story season has opened on the east coast of the State both auspiciously and conspicuously. "One night last week," it says, "a snake, which apparently was out making whoopee, climbed a power company's pole, got tangled up with the wires, caused a short circuit, and left everything on the east coast from West Palm Beach to Fort Lauderdale in the dark." One recognizes at once all the makings of a good snake story, and there is no let-down or sad ending to spoil what follows. It was a blacksnake, one learns further, which accounts for its ability to climb a smooth pole—all blacksnakes and "blue racers" are proficient in that art. The skilled reptile wriggled itself to the top of the pole, possibly thinking it was a wireless system. Or maybe it was just that the snake's early education in electricity had been defective. Anyhow, when the snake reached the top of the pole it carelessly allowed its head to come in contact with a high-voltage line at the same moment that it undertook to get a tail-hold on another wire. In less than a second, cafeterias, hotels, night clubs, amusement parks, theaters, and homes had to fall back on lamps, candles, electric flashlights, or just matches.

* * * * *

THE snake had evidently abstained from alcohol and tobacco in its youth and so was able to put up a game fight for its life when the crisis arrived. Sixty thousand volts of the best electricity the Florida Power Company had to offer flowed through the snake's body, but though "cooked

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to a crisp brown," the *Evening Independent* avers, "it remained in one piece." The newspaper fails to state whether or not the doughty reptile lived through the process, but that is a detail of little interest to anyone except, perhaps, the snake. The newspaper does say, though, that the east-coast manager of the power company was rather flabbergasted, remarking that in his experience whenever a cocoanut palm fell on a wire the current invariably burned the tree in two. Not so, it appears, with Florida blacksnakes.

* * * * *

THE story seems almost flawless as it stands, but the *Evening Independent* complains that one important point was not explained. Why, it wants to know, did the snake climb the pole? Speculating on this point, the journal suggests that the reptile may have found a still and after slaking its thirst, obeyed the impulse which has been known to cause humans in a similar situation to try to climb lamp posts or other poles. Or the snake may have gone up the pole to hunt woodpeckers, a variety of game much esteemed in snakedom. Again, hazards the newspaper, the reptile may have made the ascent to take electric treatment for its rheumatism. And, finally, it may have gone up the pole just for the fun of the trip. "Certainly," the newspaper concludes plaintively, "there should have been some explanation of why the snake went up the pole." The Drifter raises his hand eagerly, confident that he can supply the explanation. Recalling the answer to the classic conundrum "Why does the old hen cross the road?" the Drifter replies that the snake had been reading the success stories in the popular magazines and climbed the pole because it wanted to get to the top.

THE DRIFTER

Correspondence

Police Brutality

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: The sheer brutality of the police in Union Square on March 6 makes one ill. I am not in sympathy with the Communist movement, but the beating of defenseless men and women by armed men is a disgrace to our alleged civilization. Can you not raise your voice in protest against this disgusting condition? Can you not find words that will bite into the consciousness of the authorities so that they will desist from such disgraceful exhibitions of brute force?

New York, March 12 M. S. SHEFFERMAN

There *Is* a Conspiracy

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Your suspicion, expressed editorially in the issue of March 12, that there is a wicked conspiracy against buying books is more than half right. There is one, and a lot of us are in it; and moreover we're going to stay in it until the publishers get on their mark in the matter of reasonable prices for their output.

About one book in a hundred published is worth keeping; I say this in the face of an unprecedented, and not unbiased, claque. Books are made to pass an idle hour and be thrown away. We used to pay a dollar to a dollar and a quarter for them; now we have to pay two to two and a half dollars; yet during the same period we have seen the price of automobiles go from $1,500 down to $600 for an infinitely better machine. Moreover, by waiting six months we can buy our book in perfectly good format for seventy-five cents a copy.

I get books from a library for two reasons aside from the above, namely, to pass the time pleasantly, and to see whether the book is worth buying to keep. Libraries are making readers; readers will pay for good books; but they will not be mulcted, though the publishers weep. We don't get Mr. Ford's autos, nor Mr. Gillette's razors from a "library," because we can buy them at a reasonable price.

Detroit, Michigan, March 8 MAYNARD D. FOLLIN

"Noble in Motive"

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In the last paragraph on page 231 of your issue of February 26, in referring to the "so-called Hoover reforms," you use the phrase "noble experiment." In your edition of March 5 the very first editorial repeats this inaccuracy. Permit me to quote to you the correct version of the statement of President Hoover in his speech of acceptance at Palo Alto: "Our country has deliberately undertaken a great social and economic experiment, *noble in motive* and far-reaching in purpose."

It is disheartening to the loyal readers of *The Nation* to be obliged to question its truthfulness because of repeated inaccuracies of statement.

New York, March 4 ALIDA LATTIMORE

Economics and Ethics

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Henry Raymond Mussey's review of John A. Hobson's book, "Economics and Ethics," had a peculiar attraction for me. Something over forty years ago I made the acquaintance of a printer in New York who had written a book on a subject connected with both economics and ethics. My friend's book had a considerable circulation, and he later wrote others, one of which especially should be carefully read or read again by both Mr. Hobson and Mr. Mussey.

It appears that my printer friend had very definite ideas about political economy, and it comes to my mind that he cautioned his readers to be carefully on guard when dealing with utterances of those who undertook to label their subject "economics" rather than "political economy," because, he said, the term economics had been used to make what is not really political economy pass for political economy. In his last book, he argued that a true political economy had nothing whatever to do with ethics, and he went on to say about political economy this pregnant sentence:

> Although it will be found incidentally to throw a most powerful light upon, and to give a most powerful support to, the teachings of moral or ethical science, its proper business is neither to explain the difference between right and wrong nor to persuade to one in preference to the other.

If my printer friend was an able man, well informed, and remarkable for his power of analysis, arrangement, and illustration, and if his views were evidently greatly at variance with those of Mr. Hobson and Mr. Mussey, the question may be asked which views are the most worthy of being referred to and explained in the columns of *The Nation.*

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Our own John Dewey not long ago wrote of my printer friend as follows:

> It would require less than the fingers of the two hands to enumerate those who, from Plato down, rank with this man among the world's social philosophers. No man, no graduate of a higher educational institution, has a right to regard himself as an educated man in social thought unless he has some first-hand acquaintance with the theoretical contribution of this great American thinker.

His name was Henry George.

Long Branch, N. J., March 3 GEORGE WHITE

In Defense of Henry P. Fletcher

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: I do not know, of course, the source of the information upon which *The Nation* based its statement, in the issue of February 19, that "as for Henry P. Fletcher, his discouraging record as Ambassador to Mexico, where he stood with the interventionists, is clearly on record." But I do know this: it is not so. This is not entirely a personal expression of fact and opinion, although I was a constant and close observer, on the ground, of Fletcher's official conduct during all of his diplomatic career in Mexico. For if we choose to stand by the record we find that Fletcher was certainly in hot water with, and covertly and overtly criticized by, the outstanding interventionists of his time. You know who they were.

For proof, *vide* the attacks upon him which were permitted to go into the record of the notoriously interventionist activities of the committee of the Senate which investigated Mexico, as well as Fletcher's conservative and judicial statements regarding conditions in Mexico, which he had made previously as a witness before a similar investigating committee of the House. These are matters of accurate record.

Very distinctly, also, I recall a certain occasion upon which I heard Fall, who was famously head devil among all the thirty-third-degree interventionists, criticize Fletcher bitterly for not handling his job as Ambassador to Mexico in the manner in which Fall thought it should be handled.

Mexico City, February 20 ROBERT HAMMOND MURRAY

Czecho-Slovak Minorities

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: In *The Nation* of March 5 Mr. S. Klíma takes exception to your statement in an editorial of December 25 that Czecho-Slovakia has "treated the minorities treaties very much like scraps of paper." The December, 1929, issue of *Nation und Staat,* a Viennese journal devoted to the interests of minorities, fully substantiates your editorial. From a review of the progress—and retrogression—of the rights of minorities during 1929, I note the following, which, for the sake of brevity, I translate into abstract form:

> In Czecho-Slovakia the year began with the inauguration of the administrative reforms of 1927. In the provinces and government districts, it will be remembered, one-third of the representatives are appointed; and not only the "minorities" but also the Slovaks are disregarded in these appointments. Not a single German has been appointed as provincial president or vice-president. The same discrimination was exercised in the formulation of the law providing for representation in the Chamber of Commerce. As regards foreign affairs, we need only to call attention to the fact that Minister Benes, in the League of Nations, made himself leader of the enemies of the minorities. Within the Czecho-Slovak state there was no advance whatever in the rights of minorities in 1929.

In general, it may be said that in all the newly created states except Esthonia and Rumania there was not only no advance in the rights of minorities, but an actual retrogression; and, one may add, if in the two old states that acquired a large number of unwilling subjects, namely, Italy and France, minorities suffered no more last year than they had before, it is because the governments of these states started at the nadir of injustice and could not, therefore, have retrograded. The student who has followed the policy of these two states, together with those of Poland and Jugoslavia, in their attitude toward minorities has given up all hope of generosity or justice on their part; but those who associate the new state of Czecho-Slovakia with its founder and first President, Masaryk, the liberal scholar and philosopher, are keenly disappointed at finding that the rights for which he fought to create a new state are so disregarded, now that he rules over it.

Oberlin, Ohio, March 5 KARL F. GEISER

For Baltimore Readers

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: Readers of *The Nation* in Baltimore are invited to join a luncheon group which is now being organized. These luncheons will be held on the first Monday of each month at the clubhouse of the Women's City Club, 15 Mt. Vernon Place. Reservations may be made through the House Secretary of the club, Miss Brinkley (Vernon 4356).

Baltimore, March 10 MRS. WILLIAM J. BROWN

Boy Scouts and Peace

TO THE EDITOR OF THE NATION:

SIR: *The Nation* for February 19 contained a letter from Abraham A. Conan relating to the bill introduced into the New York Assembly by Assemblyman Coughlin, proposing to institute training under the Boy Scout program in the public schools.

While this measure was introduced by Mr. Coughlin with the very best intentions in the world because he believes that the Boy Scout program is bringing something to the boyhood of America, yet I join with Mr. Conan in holding that such a law would be out of harmony with the democratic ideals and the best traditions of our Republic, and just as sincerely as you could possibly wish it I hope that it may not receive serious consideration at the hands of the legislature.

I would, however, most certainly disagree with him that this measure would have any unfavorable bearing upon the cause of international peace. If he might have seen the great international jamboree of Boy Scouts at Birkenhead, England, last summer, where between fifty and sixty thousand boys from forty-two nations and seventy-three lands were gathered together for two weeks in the greatest comradeship and friendship, he would feel, I am certain, that the Boy Scout movement is making its contribution to settlement of world differences. To be sure there is discipline in the Boy Scout organization, but there is no such thing as a military discipline.

The main point which I should like to establish with you, however, is that under no circumstances nor conditions are boys forced into the Boy Scout movement. The whole genius of the movement consists in presenting a program which shall be so attractive that boys will want to be Scouts.

New York, February 28 JAMES E. WEST

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Books, Music, Drama

Mountain Background

By GLENN WARD DRESBACH

This is the background for the silver plunge
Of waterfalls, for wings like petals blown
Across infinity, and for the lunge
Of fiery swords against the shields of stone.
Here cedars from contention in the dark
Affirm the nearness of the stars, and here
Age-carved designs remain unchanged by mark
Of pageants fading down another year.

Plows cannot bite this soil to tenderness,
Or fences leap the gorge and grip the ledge.
A man is one more shadow here, to press
Against the stone or face across the edge
Infinity that answers—if he calls—
With echoes hurled back by a thousand walls.

An Unrepentant Naturalist

Montaigne. By André Gide. Translated by Stephen H. Guest and Trevor E. Blewitt. Horace Liveright. Autographed Limited Edition. $5.

I FIND the style and structure of this volume irritating. The reaction in France against the grace and fluency of Anatole France and his school has gone in some instances to absurd lengths, and leading French writers seem now to be seeking a reputation for depth and subtlety by the process of endlessly qualifying their sentences, ripping them open and stuffing them full of involved parentheses. I offer a brief example from M. Gide's present essay:

> One of the most surprising passages in Montaigne is that wherein, after having defended himself against the accusation of obscurity (an accusation doubtless leveled in his day against any writer who broke with conventional sentiment by attempting a stricter sincerity) and protested against the insupportable confounding of obscurity with depth that already certain "precious" writers were delighting in ("they will conclude the mystery and depth of my sense by the obscuritie" III, 245), he declares: "which" (obscurity) "I hate" (subsequently he added "extreemely") "and would shun if I could disguise myselfe" (later on he substituted "avoide myselfe").

M. Gide is not satisfied with wedging these qualifications and parentheses into nearly all his sentences; he sprinkles them with asterisks that refer us to notes in the back, and the notes are frequently further modifications. He is capable of writing, for example, that Goethe is superior to Montaigne by virtue of his "interior demon," then of referring us to a note in the appendix in which he finds that "on maturer consideration, this remark about Goethe no longer seems to me quite justified"—and so on. I hope I am not too naive in asking why, in that case, he did not alter his original remark.

The irritation produced by all this is aggravated by several other factors. The book puts forward no clear single thesis, moves in no particular direction, and has no continuity or flow. It is simply a series of footnotes, often not more than a page or two in length, on various passages from Montaigne. The notes are separated by blank lines, and strung along apparently in random fashion. The general effect is almost as if M. Gide had once planned a substantial book on Montaigne, had begun taking notes on it, and then, despairing of ever being able to weave them into an integral whole, had simply sent them off to the printer as they were.

Add further that the translators, in transcribing the passages from Montaigne, have used the Florio translation. Now Florio has a salty Elizabethan flavor of his own, but he is not very accurate (he made such elementary blunders, for example, as translating *poisson* into poison), and it is often with difficulty that one finds one's way through his antiquated syntax and diction. The result is that many of the quotations as they stand are unintelligible, particularly as they are torn out of their explanatory context; and one is forced to turn either directly to the Florio or to the admirable modern translation of Trechmann to squeeze the meaning out of them.

I need hardly say that as a result of all this M. Gide's book lacks the independent charm that first-rate criticism ought to have; one cannot enjoy it for its own sake in the way that one can the essays on Montaigne by Emerson and Sainte-Beuve. M. Gide thinks that Montaigne would forgive him "for treating him in the desultory fashion that is his own," but there is a vast difference between the desultoriness of Montaigne and that of his critic. Montaigne's writing, indeed, has the informality of conversation, but few writers carry you along so swiftly and easily as he does; his transitions and digressions, too, are as natural as those of fine talk. In M. Gide's present volume there are no transitions; the reader is simply bumped abruptly from one idea to the next.

Taken separately, however, M. Gide's observations are remarkably just and shrewd, and, in the end, rather thorough. Few comments are happier than that in which Gide regrets Montaigne's death a few years before the appearance of "Don Quixote": "The book was written for him. . . . It was at the expense of Don Quixote that, little by little, Sancho Panza came to great stature in him." And the concluding section of Part I is so admirable that I cannot forbear quoting it at length:

> To those who may accuse me of presenting Montaigne's ideas edge foremost I would reply that too many of his commentators have busied themselves with supplying buttons for his foils. . . . The chief preoccupation of the pundits, in the face of daring authors who nevertheless have become classics, is to make them inoffensive. The mere passage of time works also, admirably, and quite naturally, toward this end. After a brief interval it is as if the blade of new thought had become blunt; familiarity allows us to handle it without fear of being wounded.

One more point, which M. Gide merely hints at in passing, but which, in view of the present vogue of humanism, is worth explicit statement. Montaigne, a century and a half before Rousseau came into the world, and when even Francis Bacon was no more than an infant, was already a confirmed "naturalist." The passages in which he reveals this are too numerous for quotation. I confine myself to three:

> Philosophy appears to me very childish when she rides the high horse, and preaches to us that it is a barbarous alliance to marry the divine with the earthly . . . that sensual pleasure is a brutish thing, unworthy to be enjoyed by the sage. . . .
>
> Nature has, with motherly care, observed this rule, that the actions she has laid upon us for our need should give us pleasure; and she invites us to them, not only through our reason, but through our desire. It is wrong to infringe her rules.
>
> As I have said elsewhere, I have for my part adopted, very simply and crudely, this ancient rule, "that we cannot go wrong if we follow Nature," and that the sovereign precept is "to conform to her."

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These sentiments, no doubt, are somewhat embarrassing to Mr. Babbitt's theory that all such heresy stems from Rousseau, but it is rather late for anything to be done about it.

HENRY HAZLITT

Froude Rehabilitated

Froude and Carlyle: A Study of the Froude-Carlyle Controversy. By Waldo H. Dunn. Longmans, Green and Company. $5.

IT is idle to regret that there ever was any quarrel over Froude's handling of the Carlyle documents and his personal portrait of Carlyle. The controversy, which still persists after fifty years, had the good effect of bringing out all the facts, however muddled by useless bickerings and adventitious and irrelevant interests. Now Professor Dunn seems to have settled the main questions once and for all in a volume which is a model of scholarship in its careful examination of evidence and its clear, dispassionate interpretation of the evidence. Though in the nature of the case some of the details are vexatiously minute, they are all essential, and the whole book can be read with pleasure both by those who are especially interested in Carlyle and by those who have only a general liking for any good specimen of biographical study. A brief review cannot even hint a summary of this complicated matter, the involvements of which are due primarily to the perplexing, many-sided Carlyle, the scarcely less multiple character of his wife, and the intricate difficulties of the task which Carlyle placed upon the shoulders of Froude. It should be said at once, however, that the upshot of it all is wholly satisfactory so far as the really important persons are concerned, that Thomas and Jane Carlyle and Froude emerge without a serious blemish on their extraordinarily fine characters, that they are seen more clearly than ever as what they indubitably were—salient, admirable, remarkable persons. The shortcomings of such persons are noteworthy simply because the persons are in every way noteworthy, because they stand up under temperamental failings and harassments of circumstance by virtue of their superb courage and intellectual power.

Two or three persons do not come out altogether well: Carlyle's niece, Mary, who, more than anybody else, started the argument; Mary's husband and cousin, Alexander Carlyle, who naturally carries on his wife's spirit; James Crichton-Browne and David Wilson, to whom the muses seem to have issued no valid license to write biography at all; and, most important of the outside contributors to the stewing caldron, Charles Eliot Norton, who quite honestly got on the wrong side in spite of the plain rebuke administered to him by an inside and loyal authority, Ruskin. Norton's eminence gave great weight to his opinions, which were unfavorable to Froude and prevailed unquestioned among American students who were brought up to regard Norton as the grand old man of Harvard. Younger instructors under Norton's influence taught us that Froude had blackened his master and that Norton had come to the rescue, corrected Froude's editing, removed the smirches, and cleaned everything up beautifully. This simply never happened, because Froude never blackened Carlyle, never misrepresented him, was never guilty of anything but minor inaccuracies which no more disfigure his magnificent portrait than a speck of dust on a great painting, never underpraised Thomas or overpraised Jane, never did anything but adore and celebrate his hero and his heroine, but like the honest man and excellent artist that he was, drew them in the spirit of Cromwell's injunction to the portrait painter, "wart and all."

When, in accordance with the unequivocal and complete discretion given to Froude by Carlyle and confirmed by many years of intimate association and discussion, Froude published the "Reminiscences," Mary Carlyle immediately, in letters to the *Times* and the *Daily Telegraph,* accused him of having published the book against her uncle's wishes. This was a false charge, by any reasonable interpretation of Carlyle's written will or of Froude's understanding of his master's spoken instructions. The young lady wanted the commercially valuable literary remains of Carlyle for herself, and that was all that really ailed her. But she was not the only mischief-maker. For years Froude's other work had entangled him in controversy, and his enemies were lying in wait for him. Here was a chance to strike him and discredit him. But they made a mistake. Froude was legally right and morally right, and though he was very patient he was a good fighter and naturally sensitive when his honor and good faith were attacked. He left with his children, to defend his reputation after his death, the pamphlet "My Relations with Carlyle," which the Froudes published in 1903 (Froude died in 1894).

The pamphlet revealed what hitherto Froude had delicately suppressed, that Carlyle once in a fit of violence had left "blue marks" on Jane's wrists, and that, as the inner circle of the Carlyle acquaintance already knew, Carlyle was sexually incapable. This set going a fresh controversy, in medical and lay journals, as to Mrs. Carlyle's condition and physical competence. The net conclusion from that discussion is that these two passionate, high-strung people were not ultimately happy together, and that they went through a nerve-racking experience for many years with great bravery and undeviating devotion to their ideas of duty. They were largely saved, no doubt, by their infallible pawky humor. Perhaps between them they had too much genius for one small house to hold. But the genius was there, and that is what really matters for literature. Something else matters immensely, the genius of Froude, who has given us one of the supreme masterpieces of literary biography, rivaled only by Boswell's "Johnson," Lockhart's "Scott," and Forster's "Dickens." Something may still be added to our understanding of Carlyle, but no biography can supersede Froude's. Professor Dunn says: "On the foundation of Froude's work there will some day be constructed a short and properly proportioned interpretation of Carlyle." Well, who in the world is better qualified to write it than Professor Dunn himself?

JOHN MACY

Why We Fought

Why We Fought. By C. Hartley Grattan. The Vanguard Press. $3.50.

IN the front of this book the author quotes Randolph Bourne as saying: "There is work to be done to prevent this war of ours from passing into mythology as a holy crusade." Mr. Grattan here does his part of the job with competence and spirit. He deals with the propaganda, the economics, and the diplomacy that sent us into the war with Germany. The effect is terrifying—terrifying because of its revelations of the weakness of a democracy whose virtue can be so readily taken by such clumsy suitors as the Allies and their friends this side the water.

To be sure, it was no great trick for the jingoes, as Mr. Grattan abundantly proves, to win over such incorrigible Anglophiles as Walter Hines Page and Colonel E. M. House. Our Ambassador to Great Britain and Mr. Wilson's Man Friday both show themselves to have been as easy pickings for the Allied diplomats prior to our entrance into the war as was Mr. Wilson at Versailles. Even little Jimmy Gerard (perhaps it was his Tammany training) comes off better than these inflated two. And Bryan, by comparison, was the stern realist.

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About Haiti.....

THE MAGIC ISLAND
William B. Seabrook

Here is the book which, besides being one of the most exciting and entertaining books in print, is also the most thorough modern work on Haiti. Mr. Seabrook knew President Borno, Mr. and Mrs. Russell, Chauvet and all the other personalities figuring in the current news. The intimate friend of both Marines and natives, his unbiased but extremely revealing discussion of the Haiti situation should be read by everyone who professes an opinion on the relations between the U. S. and her dependents. $3.50

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edited by Kirby Page

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Capitalism: *For,* E. R. A. Seligman; *Against,* H. R. Mussey.
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Mr. Page is editor of *The World Tomorrow.*
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HARCOURT, BRACE AND COMPANY, 383 MADISON AVE., NEW YORK

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But what happened to 100,000,000 people, irritated perhaps but by no means in a hot fighting mood, between November 7, 1916, when they reelected Wilson because "he kept us out of war" and April 6, 1917, when they cheered Wilson because he put us in?

Mr. Grattan's book is more a masterly compilation of the "revisionist" documents and the post-war memoirs than any new contribution to the perplexed matter of our amazing war entrance. It serves the useful purpose of reminding us once more that democracy's Achilles's heel is its foreign relations; and that any little group of weak and wilful men, uninformed and irresponsible to a real public desire, can set the war drums beating at the command of that powerful minority which likes its music martial.

McALISTER COLEMAN

From the French

"— *& Co.*" By Jean-Richard Bloch. Translated by C. K. Scott-Moncrieff. With an Introduction by Romain Rolland. Simon and Schuster. $3.

IN a somewhat windy introduction to this very interesting novel Romain Rolland compares it to the work of Balzac. If one is thinking of style, the comparison is inept enough, since the tales of Balzac belong, despite all his grandiose ideas concerning the possibilities of fiction, to the careless youth of the art when one aimed high, wrote fast, and trusted that any defects of structural detail would be forgotten amidst the rush of creative energy; whereas Jean-Richard Bloch composes words into sentences, sentences into paragraphs, and paragraphs into chapters with all the meticulous care of a man who knows that his later compatriots from Flaubert to Gide have delighted to scan a novel as narrowly as though it were a lyric. But if, on the other hand, one is thinking not of style but of theme, then the comparison is not unfitting, for "— & Co." is concerned with Balzac's favorite subject, which is money, and tells a Balzacian tale of a Jewish family mastered and destroyed by its love of honest gain.

The Simlers, weavers of Alsace, fled from their native province when it was annexed by the Prussians. They settled farther south, beginning again from the beginning, and continuing with dogged perseverance until they alone survived in the region, while their more graceful and easy-going neighbors went down one by one in an industrial upheaval. But their success—if success it was—was made possible only by the fact that they allowed themselves to become merely the creatures of the mill, which became in its turn the one justification of their existence. They were Jews with all a Jew's fidelity to the traditions of his race, but these very traditions lent themselves to the habits of which they were the victims. Family loyalty expressed itself as loyalty to the company which had absorbed the family, and the individual's obligation to sacrifice himself to duty meant primarily that the individual must sacrifice himself to that group prosperity which it was one's chief duty to maintain.

Alone in a Catholic society, the Simlers were equally untouched by the contempt with which they were first received and the respect which their success earned them, for despite the fact that they thought themselves too French to remain in a conquered province they permitted themselves little community with any group except their own. Once a year their factory, whose wheels on no other occasion could stop, ceased turning on the day of their religious holiday. Once a year the Simlers, with shawls about their shoulders, passed twenty-four hours in fasting and prayer. Yet even the son did not know what the father believed, for religion itself had no implications outside the circle of interests bounded by the walls of the mill, and it meant only that once a year one must tell God that He was somehow the reason why one sacrificed everything to the institution which, by being handed down from father to son, had become the sacred trust of every Simler. One member of the family escapes—runs away to America and returns years later with fabulous tales of more efficient factories. But he is the only one who can do so, and he has earned the reproof which is so quietly expressed because it seems to the man who utters it so crushingly unanswerable:

> He has run away. I call that cowardice. We have no right, Chosef, no right. There are certain things which we do not leave behind us, like an empty barrel: the business to which we have pledged ourselves and which bears our name, our parents, wife, children. We are all bound up with what we have done, and today is bound up with yesterday and tomorrow, and so on, like . . . the links in a chain. He thought he was setting himself free. He will live and learn. . . . And that was forbidden him, to him more than to anyone.

Bloch's style, self-conscious to the last degree, occasionally forgets such admirable simplicity as this and falls into the strained, over-intense metaphors which are the characteristic defects of the writer too anxious to keep the emotional tension through every paragraph—as it does, for example, in a passage like the following, which is, after all, merely intended to describe a hot day: "The white heat of two o'clock in the afternoon is as vertical as a flagstaff. The cry of the grasshoppers shoots its shrill points up at the sky and supports the motionless weight of the zenith. The firmament opens with the colorless misery of a blind man's eyeball." But there is no denying either the extraordinary effectiveness of the novel as a whole or the striking fashion in which it illustrates the possible effectiveness of the intellectualist treatment of the passions. Bloch, himself a Jew, has succeeded in two remarkable feats: in the first place he has comprehended through the mind the tradition which he has set out to record, and in the second place he has managed to record it in a manner which communicates the emotion without ever ceasing to seem in itself calm, detached, and almost cold. The passion of the Simlers is real, stupendous, and, because of its intensity, almost noble, but it has come to one through the understanding alone.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

Bland Futility

John Merrill's Pleasant Life. By Alice Beal Parsons. E. P. Dutton and Company. $2.50.

MRS. PARSONS is above all else intelligent, and she demands intelligence in return from her readers. For a novelist this is probably a limitation. I confess to reading to the very end of her latest book and then being obliged to turn back to the title before I thought I knew what the story was about. Mrs. Parsons disdains signposts along the way. She will not say: "This is a novel about love or about ambition or about ingratitude." She merely tells her tale quietly, competently, matter-of-factly. You must take it or leave it; you may understand it or be puzzled by it; be moved or left cold—Mrs. Parsons refuses to help you out. But I believe this is the story of John Merrill upon whom the impacts of experience made no mark; who was either so hard as to be impervious or so soft as to be completely resilient to the stings of unrequited love, to the boredom of a stupid, nagging wife, to whatever pangs of conscience might result from ingratitude to his benefactor and unfaithfulness to his wife. Things happen to John Merrill: he is in love with a heartless flirt who jilts him time and again; he marries a lovely, dumb girl who can offer him no companionship except that of the

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bed, which she withholds whenever she is offended at some trifle or other; he is offered a career and a fortune by a rich eccentric who, without an heir, is in search of someone to succeed him in his business. All these things John Merrill lives through, and at the end he is the same slightly bald, smooth-faced, smooth-minded, rather dull man he was when he started. He accepts good fortune as easily as he shakes off bad. He is, in a sense, without pride. He lives a day at a time; he is sometimes miserable, but as a child is miserable, because something he wants very badly is denied him. After a while he contents himself with wanting something else.

As in Mrs. Parsons's earlier novel, "The Insider," here is a clearly recognizable aspect of the American scene. Material success, a kind of literacy but no real intellectual attainments, an easy assimilation of what is the correct mode in literature as in house furnishings, emotions that are quick enough to respond to stimulus but that are fundamentally without passion, above all, a complete absence of generosity—not the easy generosity of giving away what you do not especially want, but the generosity of a free-flowing spirit. I think of John Merrill as a sort of snail, snug in the shell that his lack of imagination made of the world. He is completely protected—from pain and from joy. Mrs. Parsons has made him thoroughly convincing. Incidentally she has drawn extraordinarily clear portraits of three women: Anne, who could be ardent only when her lover was not near her; Mrs. Daggett, whose "being seemed relaxed and open," all of whose "nerves were untied"; and Mary, Merrill's wife, eager, trivial, manually competent, and quite without a mind. But these are only parts of John Merrill's pleasant life. Mrs. Parsons has told it with irony, with clarity—and without pity. The result may be a book that moves the mind more than the heart, but it is a book worth reading in spite of that.

DOROTHY VAN DOREN

The Pueblo Artist

The Pueblo Potter. By Ruth L. Bunzel. Columbia University Press. $10.

THIS is one of an increasing number of books which excite question. What, in the flood of publications designed to interest the reader anxious for information and dubious of technical patter, is the moral responsibility of the publisher who puts a book forth under titles and descriptions which have little relation to its real worth? Here is a volume presented by a title with a misleading finality and a descriptive misrepresentation which by disappointing the expectation of the reader might do great injustice to the writer. Miss Bunzel's book is modestly written, and every item of its information carefully accounted for, but it is by no means an exhaustive study of the subject, nor even the fruit of a two years' contact as the publisher advertises. The author, by her own account, spent two summers in the pueblo country, mainly at the three pueblos of Zuñi, Acoma, and San Ildefonso, and at the Hopi group. She has also read widely on the subject, and for this preparation, her material is creditable in amount and interestingly set down. It is, indeed, excellent as far as it goes. Probably nothing will have to be retracted even in view of the great mass of material on the subject soon to burst upon the reading world. I question the dates of several of the pots selected for illustration, but that is a minor detail. Had the work been put forth as a short modern contact with a few of the existing pueblos, from which two of the most interesting are omitted—Sia, almost as rich as Zuñi in design, and Cochití, unique among the more than two score villages—there would have been little to criticize. This is undoubtedly the way a few potters in a few pueblos are making and decorating pots.

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The fact is that the Amerind tribesman cannot competently be studied in any one aspect of his close-woven life without more than a little knowledge of some of the others. Many of the questions as to the source and implications of designs, which Miss Bunzel frankly admits her inability to answer, never can be answered without reference to the earlier art of Amerind poetry. If, for instance, it had occurred to her to ask of those designers who told her that they "dreamed" their patterns whether they dreamed them asleep or awake, she might have put her hand upon the key, for to the Indian a dream-vision or "dream-seeing," as I have heard them call it, is in reality the result of that intense inner concentration known to all creative artists. In the primitive it comes closer to genuine sleep-dreaming than with us, but it is the state of mind in which the outer consciousness becomes momentarily receptive to the inner activity from which all art proceeds. Miss Bunzel notes that what an Indian calls a design is not what we call a design, but she fails to realize that it is, in fact, a figure of speech. Familiarity with the poetry of the *pueblеños* would have supplied her with explicit phrasing of what her informants tried to give in prose. I suggest that the reader compare the following quotations with the descriptions of pottery designs such as she records. The quotations are from rain songs.

"Let the sky be covered with clouds as the earth with flowers."

"White blossom-clouds."

"Dark cloud, over the waiting corn, let the rain down."

This is merely by way of suggesting the treasures of Indian thought which escape the most conscientious student who attempts to unlock them with only one key. Or a knowledge of sign-writing might have cleared up Miss Bunzel's confusion as to the distinctions between expressive design and symbolic pattern as these appear on ceremonial objects. Or again, the realization that the paucity of significance in design which she reports from Acoma corresponds to a like meagerness of poetic content in their songs might have suggested that Acoma is the point at which to begin a study of design separating itself from ideation and continuing on its own.

It is the lack of this wider acquaintance with the way of art in the Indian mind that makes Miss Bunzel's concluding chapter less valuable than the preceding descriptive matter. One feels that much of it might have been written from the stereotypes about primitive art in the general mind without reference to the pueblos. One wishes, indeed, that the technical student would refrain from attempted explanations of art processes in any medium. What Miss Bunzel saw and handled and heard has the stamp of authenticity. What she infers and concludes lacks the validity of the completed inquiry.

MARY AUSTIN

A Cattleman's Life Story

A Vaquero of the Brush Country. By J. Frank Dobie. Dallas: The Southwest Press. $3.50.

JOHN YOUNG, the veteran cattleman, tells the story of his life, and Mr. Dobie, with a practiced hand, puts it into form. It is a story of the Texas cattle country from the days of the open range to the days of barbed-wire inclosures, and it brings in adventures with Indians, cattle thieves, horse thieves, and all-round bad men. It is, however, something more than a biography, for into the personal reminiscence has been skilfully woven a historical sketch of the period, with much description and other informative material.

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spun about him, Young portrays him as a professional cheat, gambler, thief, and gunman, without loyalty to his friends and without respect for any of the decencies of life. The cattleman had many thrilling encounters with bad men, and one may well believe in the aptness of the tribute paid him by George W. Saunders, president of the Old Time Trail Drivers' Association, that he "would charge hell with a bucket of water." But there is no vaunting in the recital, and some of the incidents of his courage the author-editor has had to get from other men.

One may doubt if any more intimate and authentic depiction of the range has ever been given. Certainly there is nothing on the subject more delightfully written, or more handsomely put into print. W. J. GHENT

When News Was Young

Some Forerunners of the Newspaper in England, 1476-1622. By Matthias A. Shaaber. University of Pennsylvania Press. $4.

MR. SHAABER has shown much enterprise in examining a deal of dull matter, along with some that is sensational, to demonstrate how the people of England satisfied their curiosity for news in the one hundred and fifty years after the introduction of the printing-press. The term "newspaper" does not occur until after the Restoration, and what is usually set down as the first newspaper, a weekly which appeared irregularly in the decade 1622-32, was in reality a pamphlet known in those days as a "newsbook." It was almost entirely a translation of news reports from abroad. As the author himself, toward the end of his volume, says:

> We have now arrived at the grand anticlimax of the early history of journalism in England—all the printed news discussed above had nothing to do, directly, with the origin or form of the first newspaper. Indirectly it doubtless did much to prepare the way by creating a body of news-readers and, more importantly, by leading certain publishers into the purveying of news as a specialty of their trade. But the first English newspaper was . . . not a native growth; its ancestors were the same as those of the earliest Continental periodicals.

In his survey of all this antecedent matter Mr. Shaaber examines official proclamations and state papers, political and religious propaganda, official accounts of wars and rebellions, ballads and broadsides and the like. The most spirited chapter has to do with popular news, which usually in ballad form described the doings at court, murders and other crimes, miracles, prodigies, and wonders, monstrous births and strange beasts, witchcraft, the plague, and acts of God such as flood and fire and the weather—all accompanied by much moralizing. Murders, then as now, excited enormous interest, that of Sir Thomas Overbury, friend of Ben Jonson, the most celebrated case, calling forth reams of wild accounts. Of all this material it can only be said that it created an appetite for news among the people and gradually showed the publishers where a great opportunity lay.

In a final chapter Mr. Shaaber discloses the fact that something like a systematic publication of the news, at least of foreign news, had for a long time been going on in the Netherlands and in Germany. Budgets embracing a year, a half-year, or a month had been appearing from early in the sixteenth century. But in both countries there were also compilations dealing with much shorter periods, usually not more than a week, and often appearing on a single sheet; in these, rather than in any of the other documents discussed in the preceding chapters, he finds the direct progenitor of the newspaper. These Continental "corantoes," as the smaller budgets

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were called, were translated into English from 1590 on, and six corantoes originating in England appeared in 1621. They differ not a little from the newsbooks to which the genesis of the newspaper has usually been ascribed. "The earmarks of the coranto are a colorless, matter-of-fact tone and the arrangement of the news under rubrics indicating the place and date of origin ('From Venice, the 13. of Ianuarie')." With some of the groundwork thus done, the newspaper might have made steady progress in England except for the disturbances caused by the approaching civil wars.

HAROLD DE WOLF FULLER

Books in Brief

Cardinal Newman. By J. Lewis May. The Dial Press. $3.50.

Inasmuch as Cardinal Newman recognized with unusual clarity the direction in which the nineteenth century was moving and was less deceived than his contemporaries by the generalizations of liberalism and the blithe efforts to reconcile science and religion, there might be considerable value in a reconsideration of his writings. Mr. May, however, has failed to bring out the importance of Newman's thought and he has been only moderately successful in the presentation of his character. Moreover, Mr. May deprives us of whatever pleasure there might be in reading his book by introducing irrelevant and platitudinous discourses, by dotting his pages with back-of-the-dictionary Latin, by ostentatiously representing himself as a profound student of artistic prose, by betraying a partisan spirit, and by repeating sage reflections and favored phrases. Cardinal Newman still remains available if anyone cares to write an interpretative study of a major Victorian prophet.

The Revolt of the Fishermen. By Anna Seghers. Translated from the German by Margaret Goldsmith. Longmans, Green and Company. $2.

Frau Segher's short novel of a young agitator who tries to organize the fishermen of Saint Barbara and fails is a story of the broadest realism conveyed in the simplest, briefest language. The effect is one of hushed restraint. The luminous bits of color in the setting and in the strife are quiet and not garish, and this gentleness of style strangely intensifies our sense of the desperation of the inarticulate peasants. The book has many elements of greatness—firm character studies, fine narration, and a sentiment of beauty—but it lacks a special time element which would bring it closer to common experience, make it applicable, as the theme warrants, to human experience in general. A sense of remoteness dulls the force of the picture.

Three Strange Lovers. By V. F. Calverton. The Macaulay Company. $2.50.

The apparent simplicity of these three stories rather disarms one's critical estimate of them. One reads easily, almost fluently, through experiences which seem increasingly "strange" and which are certainly not simple at all. The various manifestations of love which Calverton examines would be well worth the talents, in one respect, of, say, a Dostoevski and, in another, a Schnitzler. They are stories that require the greatest subtlety of understanding and expression to be successful; they are concerned not only with love but with religion and with various kinks of psychology that are thoroughly abnormal. If Calverton's stories are not wholly satisfactory, the fault lies in their execution rather than their conception—the last story is particularly well planned and dramatically effective. One feels in all of them an acute, highly sensitive intelligence and a fertile imagination at work upon the material. However, one does not feel the pulsing fulness of creation which calls

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into being rather than describes emotional values. There is, except in the last story, a lack of crystallization in the style, and in all three we stumble upon unintentionally banal expressions.

Music

The Pioneering Playhouse

FOR fifteen years the Misses Lewisohn have provided a workshop for talent, and I doubt if it is possible to exaggerate the creative value of what they have done. Much of this season's dance renaissance might be traced to the doors of the Neighborhood Playhouse, and the organization's recent program of "Symphonic Music with Stage and Orchestra," under the direction of Miss Irene Lewisohn and the Cleveland Symphony, proved one of the winter's most significant performances in this field.

Like all vital experiments, it was interesting as much for attempt as achievement. If the attempt was to create a single aesthetic whole from the elements of orchestra and dance, it was for me not successful, for reasons too elaborate to be more than touched on here. Both music and dance have so expanded since the remote time when they blended in the archaic Greek *orchesis,* a single melodic line and a single gesture embodying the same impulse, that the observer can no longer synthesize them. Each has become a full-bodied, autonomous art demanding his full response, and he oscillates between them. But if, as the program indicated, the conception was that of symphonic music with the stage as an adjunct, it must be judged differently. Three pieces were given: Loeffler's "Pagan Poem," Rabaud's "La Procession Nocturne," and Janssen's "New Year's Eve in New York." The last two were unfamiliar to me, but seemed well and sensitively read. Mr. Sokoloff conducted the first with the vigor and finesse that have made this score his finest performance, and with Harold Bauer illuminating the difficult piano part it was a joy to hear. The choreography, worked out upon pyramidal steps leading to an altar, with a chorus of priestesses, and Martha Graham and Charles Weidman in the leading roles of enchantress and pastoral god, was original, clear, and splendidly executed. It summoned to the eye the mixture of austerity and voluptuousness, the haunting far-off quality, the dramatic intensity of the score. Indeed, there were moments of such startling beauty—the first encounter of the principals and the ultimate capitulation of the god—that music and movement seemed to flash into one entity, flooding eye and ear as through a new sense.

The quiet religious tableau following was less originally conceived, though it would perhaps be difficult to deal otherwise with Rabaud's sweet and insipid music, plaintively misquoting the Liebestod and Morales.

As to the third, it seemed to this writer, here venturing humbly upon alien ground, that music and stage rendering were grievously at odds. The undernote of Janssen's powerful score, for all its fox-trots and simulated midnight whistles, is one of spiritual exultation. It is largely abstract, and as modern as its title. Would it not have fared better with a much more simple and stylized staging—something of tilted levels upon which corps of dancers could have symbolized the varying moods of the city and built a climax of masses in motion against suggested masses of architecture? Whatever its intent, the setting employed managed to recall, it is to be feared, nothing so much as the pseudo-realism of the old Metropolitan Opera sets, with Kundry suddenly lighted up inside those pasteboard rocks. The chorus of dancers was lost in the obscurity of a street scene;

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"Within the Fortnight" appears on page 377

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by

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the soloists were cramped for space; and Miss Graham, pinned by a spotlight to an inexplicable platform in mid-air, made what she could, I suppose, of her predicament. Altogether, this experiment seemed entirely unsuccessful.

But the point is that it was an experiment. Its makers were looking for new concepts, new methods. The mistakes of innovators will always be more apparent than the mouse-like errors of those content to nibble fixed formulas. So will their achievements. The extraordinary freshness and arresting beauty of the "Pagan Poem" amply proved it.

HUBBARD HUTCHINSON

Drama

Miracle

A PLAY based upon the Bible and profoundly religious in its spirit is one of the biggest hits on Broadway. Nothing could seem more improbable than that, but nothing is, on the other hand, more obviously true, for every scene of "The Green Pastures" (Mansfield Theater) is suffused with a touching piety and (let us join the incongruous facts) seats are already selling many weeks in advance. Marc Connelly, to whom the play was suggested by a series of stories in Negro dialect—Roark Bradford's "Ol' Man Adam and His Chillun"—is the person most immediately responsible for the extraordinary performance, but neither he, the original author, nor even the fine cast of black actors can claim the largest share of the credit, since the fundamental creative work was done by the anonymous geniuses who composed the spirituals upon which the whole is based. Mr. Connelly and the rest have cooperated with great skill and delicacy; they seem, one and all, to have been gifted with a remarkable imaginative insight into the mood of the materials at hand; but neither they nor any other white men of the twentieth century could possibly have invented a mythology as rich and simple and satisfying as that which the Negroes evolved when they made the heroes of the Old Testament over into their own image.

The corpus of these spirituals constitutes, of course, the finest expression of the religious emotion achieved anywhere since the seventeenth century. That fact has been recognized for some time past, but no one seems to have suspected that it was possible to do more than perform and admire them until the makers of this piece translated the songs into pictorial form and made their ideology as well as their imagery the basis of an epic drama in the course of which a black God creates a world, saves a Noah, and leads the black children of Israel out of their Egyptian bondage. The effect is, moreover, so surprisingly fine that I can hardly help feeling that the authors and producers must have been themselves surprised at the perfection of the harmony which they have achieved and at the depth of the emotions aroused. One would expect something grotesque at its worst and quaintly charming at its best, but charm is a word in no sense appropriate to anything so deeply moving. The imagination which conceived God in the guise of a Negro preacher, and Gabriel in the guise of an amiable giant fingering his trumpet with nervous eagerness because he is anxious to put an end to the race which profoundly annoys his God, was an imagination so richly concrete as to leave no room for question, and hence capable of creating a world in which everything seems both inevitable and right. One laughs, of course, but there is no condescension in the laughter, which dies away as quickly as it should and gives place to something describable only as reverent attention.

These are not, to be sure, the Bible stories as the ancient Hebrews told them. Here the familiar tales are suffused with the spirit of a gentler race and given the setting, dress, manners, and psychology imagined to be appropriate by minds more ardent than instructed in Biblical antiquities. But the result is as genuine as that achieved when the Middle Ages lovingly reworked the same material, and this Negro version of Christian mythology is the only one now living enough to touch us as "The Green Pastures" does. After all, the true test of faith is its ability to deal intimately with the things which it professes to believe, and this is the test which the faith of the authors of the spirituals so triumphantly meets. The fact that they saw Moses as a gray-bearded "darky" is the one thing which proves to us that they saw him at all; the fact that they conceived of God as a man and of Heaven as a place is the one convincing evidence that they really believed in the existence of either. The delicacy of sophisticated religions, the strange finicalness which leads theologians to shrink from giving any features to divine personages or any scenery to divine places, is merely the result of a skepticism unwilling to confess that it is forced to doubt anything which it allows itself definitely to conceive; and though such "delicacy" may serve to keep churches open it will not serve as a basis for art—for art must have faith strong enough to embody itself in concrete images. That modern audiences are still capable of feeling—poetically at least—the religious emotions, the enthusiasm aroused by "The Green Pastures" is sufficient to prove, but the Negro mythology may quite possibly be the last thing left which can call them forth, for we certainly cannot generate them for ourselves, and we have long ago worn thin most of the other bodies of legend that have come down to us from a simpler past.

I have not read the text of "The Green Pastures," and I do not know how much of its beauty would be evident when detached from the singing of the spirituals (which makes up a part of the performance) and when deprived of the simple dignity lent to the lines by the voices and gestures of a most extraordinary company of actors. I do know, however, that the thing which becomes a living whole on the stage of the Mansfield is one of the most moving creations I have ever seen in the theater.

JOSEPH WOOD KRUTCH

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Ruth Draper—Comedy—41st St., E. of B'dway.
**Everything's Jake—Bijou—45th St., W. of B'dway.
***Flying High—Apollo—W. 42nd St.
**June Moon—Broadhurst—W. 44th St.
**Rebound—Plymouth—45th St., W. of B'dway.
**Strictly Dishonorable—Avon—W. 45th St.
***Strike Up The Band—Times Sq.—W. of B'dway.
**The First Mrs. Fraser—Playhouse—48th St., E. of B'dway.
*The Green Pastures—Mansfield—47th St., W. of B'dway.
*The Infinite Shoeblack—Elliot—39th St., E. of B'dway.
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The Rivals—Erlanger—246 W. 44th St.
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The Case of Sergeant Grischa—Globe—46th St., and B'dway.

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Schola Cantorum—Carnegie—Wed. Eve., Mar. 26.
Gigli—Carnegie—Sun. Eve., Apr. 6 (Benefit for Italian Hospital).
Philharmonic Symphony—Carnegie—Thurs. Eve., Mar. 27; Fri. Aft., Mar. 28; April 4; Sun. Aft., Mar. 30; April 6.
Student's Philharmonic Symphony—Carnegie—Sat. Eve., Mar. 22; April 5.
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Victory in Haiti

By HELENA HILL WEED
Special Representative of The Nation *in Haiti*

Port au Prince, March 11

THE President's Commission for the Study and Review of Conditions in the Republic of Haiti—to give the official title under which it works—has accomplished more work of reconciliation in one short week than would have seemed humanly possible at the outset. Under the necessity of preserving the diplomatic courtesies of the occasion, and thus making their first and formal contact with the despised Borno and his functionaries of the Council of State, they turned to face a disillusioned and justifiably suspicious nation. Owing to a wholly unintentional vagueness in defining their work in the statement given to the local press on their arrival, they faced a practical boycott from the Nationalists.

Only by the quick work of a few extraordinarily level-headed Haitians assisted by a few Americans in whom they reposed complete confidence was the mist of cynicism and distrust dispelled and a beginning made. Once the barriers were broken, the commission itself by its frank efforts to know the truth won the complete faith of all groups.

As day after day passed, each bringing before the commission individuals and delegated representatives from every walk of life, ranging from learned Supreme Court judges and scholarly educators to hard-handed workmen and simple peasants, and all bringing the same plea from every section of the republic, it was not long before the most casual observer could see what the outcome of it all must be. One witness after another told why Haiti would rather die as a nation than longer submit to the tyranny and suffering crushing the people. After a peculiarly shameful story of the way in which absolute power had developed into brutal domination and degradation, Commissioner White sat in thoughtful mood for a few moments, then penciled the following words and passed them to a friend. With Mr. White's permission I quote them:

> In that twilight zone wherein the desire to help one's fellow-men passes from fraternal association to paternal control, despotism begins to rot the heart of benevolence. And here is a curious thing: I am satisfied, by talking for hours with many Americans here, that they are honest—as men go in politics—and are sincerely imbued with a desire to help the Haitians. They feel that we who oppose them are undoing a great work. Yet so inexorably does the possession of power disintegrate the spirit that benevolence is destroyed by tyranny. There can never be a benevolent despot.

What was promised, and accepted in good faith by many Haitians, as friendly aid to reconstruct a weak and admittedly backward nation has become a complete, selfish, illegal, and in many instances brutal domination over a helpless people, who are kept in financial, economic, and racial subjection in their own country by foreign armed forces. Worse than that, their national wealth, in the hands of the invader, is used to pay the price of their degradation and to bring ease, comfort, and even luxury to their oppressors. Comparatively few instances of specific wrongs have been brought before the commission, but they can be verified on every hand by any passing stranger who can see and read. A mechanic, stranded in Haiti through the failure of the company with which he came here, was installed as a high official in the customs office at $350 a month, though Haitians of years of experience and admitted ability are kept in minor positions at pitiful salaries; there was an annual item of $40,000 a year for remount horses for the gendarmerie, which is not a mounted service, the horses being constantly used by the American officers and their wives for riding and polo; there are endless instances of racial abuses on the part of unlettered minor officials toward cultured Haitian scholars and professional men and toward women of refinement, education, and culture, while American officers live openly with Haitian girls and bring illegitimate half-breed children into the world only to abandon them at will—one could go on indefinitely. The one ray of light in the long story is the spirit of revolt among Americans themselves, in both civil and military positions, against the conditions which have developed.

The end of the first week, which began in a fog, saw earnest conferences between the commission and the committee of five Haitians representing the patriotic organizations, led by Georges Léger, son of the late J. J. Léger, former minister to the United States and for some time dean of the foreign ministers at Washington, who was called by the late Sir Julian Pauncefote, British Ambassador at Washington, "the most brilliant diplomat I have ever known." The work of young Léger in presenting the cause of Haiti has been gracious, dignified, fearless, and technically superb. One of the commissioners, in complimenting Léger upon the ability with which he had presented the case and the aid which his presentation had been to the commission, told him, in the hearing of all, that his work had equaled that of Judge Brandeis in his greatest moments. Faced by the united, determined demand of the men of Haiti, to which was added the organized and fiery demand of the League of Haitian Women, who had made such an enormous and convincing demonstration of patriotic religious fervor the Sunday after the commission arrived, and following upon these by the open support of the Nationalist cause by the Catholic church in Haiti, President Borno capitulated. Just one week after the arrival of the commission the happy solution which all had feared was weeks away, and perhaps not to be found even then, was reached by an informal agreement to which not only the commission and the Nationalists, but the Borno group also, were parties.

The plan was that the patriotic societies should send their delegates from all over the republic to Port au Prince as soon as possible and in conference with the Borno group should select, as a candidate for provisional president, to take office on the expiration of President Borno's term on

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May 15, a neutral, non-political man, acceptable to the commission, who would make the following agreement with the Haitian people: He would be formally elected by the Council of State on April 14 and as soon as he took office would call for an election to the national chambers. As soon as they could convene and organize, he would present to them his resignation as president of the republic so that they could elect a president under the constitutional forms. The plan provided that this provisional president on assuming his temporary office should abolish the Council of State, and that he should not be a candidate for the regular election by the assembly. The readjustment of all other questions was to be left to the new constitutional government, which would be a truly legal government chosen by the Haitian people. Sunday brought the official agreement of President Hoover to this plan and his promise that the government of the United States would not recognize the election of any other candidate by the Council of State than the one agreed upon under this plan by the Nationalists, the Borno group, and the commissioners. It was a happy solution of the difficulties that faced all groups. The United States, which had recognized Borno and the powers conferred on his Council of State to elect a new president on April 14, was relieved of the necessity of using further force to undo the things it had effected by force; the Nationalists had won their supreme aim of having the new president elected by a National Assembly chosen by popular vote; and the Borno group would be allowed to end their terms in peace. Haiti was throbbing with prayer and thanksgiving, and the commissioners, as they left the capital on Sunday morning for their trip of inspection through the country, were happy in the thought that their work had been fruitful of results so satisfactory to all.

But mixed with the joy of the Haitian people, as the Sunday crowds congregated in the parks and groups gathered on the spacious verandas of the homes of the elite, was a note of fear. It was not lack of confidence in the commission. They had won the absolute trust of the people. It was not suspicion of rival political groups in the Nationalist League; for though there were many aspirants for election by the chambers, all had agreed to accept the result and cooperate with the winner. But would Borno keep faith? That was the question. There were many disquieting signs. Someone had sent a cablegram to the United States declaring that a revolution had been suppressed by military force in Port au Prince the night before, when everyone knew that the perfect peace of a tropical moonlight night had reigned in every quarter of the city. All civil and military Occupation officials had been warned not to leave their homes on Saturday evening unless armed, and upon one sound of the military siren to barricade themselves in their homes and on two blasts to rush to the American Legation. What possible reason could be assigned for this real fear which seemed to grip the Occupation?

The answer soon came. Telegrams and telephone messages began to pour in from the provinces repeating the telegram that Borno had sent on Saturday, through his Minister of the Interior, to all prefects. It read:

> It is false that a provisional government will be formed, as the agitators would have the people believe. The presidential election by the Council of State will take place on April 14 and President Borno will remain in

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office until May 15. This is the exact truth which you must make known to the people. As for the legislative elections, they cannot take place before the constitutional date, the nearest one being January 10, 1932.

Other personal telegrams from Borno quoted him as saying that this agreement had been made by him with the commissioners and that he was the complete master of the situation. Consternation reigned, but through it all there was no lack of confidence in the commission. It was only a proof to all that Borno was faithless and that his Council of State could not even be trusted to keep their agreement with the commission and the Nationalists to elect the provisional president selected by them all. The meaning of the Occupation warnings became clear. Its officials knew of this Borno telegram and expected an outbreak when the people learned of it. So sure were they that the fury of the people would express itself in disorder that a revolution which never occurred was reported in advance!

Instead of fomenting disorder, the leaders immediately established telephone connections with Hinche, in the interior, where the commission was spending the night, reporting the treachery of Borno, and spread among the people wise counsels of patience and confidence in the commission. Their unanimous demand that the United States prevent any election by the Council of State had been more than justified. They could well afford to await action by the commission. They had feared that part of the agreement which gave the Council of State the right formally to ratify the nominee agreed upon by the three groups, but had yielded the point when they were promised that the United States would recognize no other election by the council. Yet here was treachery, an attempt at the first moment to undo the work of the commission.

Monday morning found President Borno confronted, first, by an angry Council of State demanding the meaning of his telegram to the prefects, and, second, by the proof given out from commission headquarters on Sunday afternoon that the contents of the telegram were false. After keeping the council waiting for four hours (it afterward developed that Borno himself was on the carpet before American officials during that time) he appeared before them and told them that General Russell had deceived him in the matter, in spite of the fact that the commission had stated that Borno in person had given them his assent to the plan at the palace on Friday. Rumors flew through the city all day Monday that a cabinet crisis was impending, but late in the afternoon the official *Moniteur* came out with a final gesture of defiance toward the commission. It read:

> As his term expires on May 15 next, he [President Borno] can consider the political plan set forth above [the commission's plan] only in that single part whose execution he has the constitutional duty to assure, namely, the election of his successor by the Council of State on April 14 next. He has given his approval to the above plan only on the formal condition that the plan shall be carried out in conformity with the constitution of Haiti and the treaty which binds the government of Haiti and the government of the United States of America.

Tonight Haiti interprets this last blast to mean that the Borno Government, rather than retreat from its position of broken faith, will resign. The country awaits the quick return of the commissioners to handle the crisis.

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